

**Learning sex and doing gender: cultures of heterosexuality in the secondary
school**

Mary Jane Kehily

**A thesis submitted to the Institute of Education, University of London for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

Culture, Communications and Society
Institute of Education
University of London
20 Bedford Way
London
WC1H 0AL

August 1999



Abstract

The thesis uses an inter-disciplinary, feminist and cultural studies approach to sexuality and schooling. The study documents the ways in which issues of sexuality feature in the school context and the implications of this for sexual learning and the production of sexual identities. The study examines the ways in which pupil cultures negotiate issues of sexuality. Pupil cultures can be understood as constitutive of informal groups of school students who actively ascribe meanings to events within specific social contexts. This approach points to the ways in which such encounters produce individual and collective identities which carry both social and psychic investments. The study focuses upon two key areas in the field of sexuality and schooling; the shaping of pupil cultures and the production of sexual identities; and secondly, the role of the school in relation to issues of sexuality. The thesis develops an analysis of pedagogic approaches to Personal and Social Education (PSE) and the ways in which the meanings and messages of the curriculum are mediated by pupil cultures. The emphasis on pupil cultures can be seen as a way of giving epistemological status to school students who *receive* the curriculum but play no part in the structuring of the school organisation or the planning of lessons. However, this approach can have the effect of seeing teachers as an oppressive, monolithic force, defined in opposition to pupils. As a corrective to this the experiences of individual teachers and their personal accounts of teaching and learning in the field of sex education are drawn upon. Teachers' perspectives can be seen as an important element in developing an understanding of current practice, in an area where both teachers and pupils may have investments in the construction and maintenance of symbolic boundaries. The study aims to contribute to academic debate and practitioner knowledge in the field of sexuality education. It is anticipated that this study will facilitate an analysis of sexuality and contemporary schooling in ways that develop our understanding of heterosexuality as a dominant category, and have implications for policy and practice in this field. The main findings of the thesis point to the significance of peer group interactions to the collective enactment of masculinities, femininities and their relationship to the sexual. The key argument of the thesis concerns the activity and agency of pupil cultures in the regulation and performance of gendered heterosexualities; through exchanges in friendship groups in school, young men and young women learn about sex and *do* gender. The project highlights the ways in which the acquisition of sexual knowledge and the enactment of gender is in dialogue with popular cultural forms such as teenage magazines, television programmes and pornographic representations. Moreover, the analysis of pupil peer groups stress the inter-relationship of psychic and social processes to collectively generated versions of sex-gender identities which further inscribe a heterosexual order upon school relations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the many friends and colleagues who have contributed to this project in different ways. First of all I would like to thank the students and teachers who shared their experiences with me. I wish to express my gratitude to Debbie Epstein who has supervised the thesis and given me generous support, guidance and encouragement especially through the difficult final stages. I wish to acknowledge the Institute of Education, University of London for the financial support of a studentship.

Many other friends have contributed to this work and sustained my interest in the project. I am indebted to Kate Corr for her support over the years, her insightful comments on the work, especially on psychoanalytic themes and for her careful proof reading of the chapters. I wish to thank Joyce Canaan for her comments, many valuable discussions and for her emotional support. I am also grateful to the Canaan-Rogers partnership for fun and expertise in another field. I am indebted to Mairtin Mac an Ghaill for his encouragement, discussions on earlier drafts of chapters and for sharing cups of tea on a Friday. I am grateful to Tuula Gordon for her friendship, her enthusiastic support of this work and for many stimulating discussions.

I wish to thank members of the Birmingham Narrative Group for interesting discussions on themes of narrative and subjectivity: Leone Burton, Joyce Canaan, Mariette Clare, Chris Griffin, Richard Johnson, Peter Redman and Deborah Steinberg. Additionally I would like to thank Peter Redman and Deborah Steinberg for their comments on chapter 4 and Richard Johnson for his comments on chapter 5. Thanks are also due to Tarja Tolonen, Val Hey, Frinde Maher, Rob Pattman, Sean Escritt, Susan Johnson and David Spencer for help along the way.

Finally, I would like to thank Anoop Nayak for always being there.

CONTENTS

1.	Sexuality and schooling: an overview	1
2	Fragments from a fading career: personal narratives and emotional investments	25
3.	Producing heterosexualities: the school as a site of discursive practices	52
4.	Agony aunts and absences: an analysis of a sex education class	78
5.	More Sugar? Teenage magazines, gender displays and sexual learning	113
6.	Understanding masculinities: young men, heterosexualities and embodiment	152
7.	Sexing the subject: teachers, pedagogies and sex education	202
8.	Researching sexuality in school: methodological musings	247
9.	Sexuality and schooling reconsidered: notes towards a conclusion	272
	Appendix A	288
	Appendix B	289
	Bibliography	290

CHAPTER 1

Sexuality and Schooling: an overview

Introduction

In this chapter I identify and introduce the aims and scope of the thesis and provide an overview of theoretical approaches to the field of my study - sexuality and schooling. Specifically, this study aims to explore the ways in which pupil cultures negotiate issues of sexuality within the context of the secondary school. I understand pupil cultures to constitute informal groups of school students who actively ascribe meanings to events within specific social contexts. My argument throughout is that this process of making meaning within the immediate realm of the local produces individual and collective identities, which carry social and psychic investments. The study documents the ways in which issues of sexuality feature in the context of pupil peer groups and the implications of this for sexual learning and the construction of sexual identities. I am particularly interested in the inter-relationship between gender and sexuality and the ways in which school students negotiate complex social relations in ways that can be both creative and constraining.

The study focuses upon two key areas in the field of sexuality and schooling: firstly, the shaping of pupil cultures and the construction of sexual identities and; secondly, teaching and learning in the field of Personal and Social Education (PSE), particularly sex education. I am interested in exploring the frameworks informing the teaching of PSE and the ways in which policy is *translated* into practice in schools. Work in this area (eg. Lees 1993, Wolpe 1988) tends to focus on the *delivery* of sex education programmes, rather than the ways they are *received* by pupils. I am concerned to explore the 'reading

effect' - the ways in which the meanings and messages of the official curriculum are mediated by pupil cultures.

The emphasis on pupil cultures can be seen as a way of 'giving voice' to school students who *receive* the curriculum but play no part in the structuring of the school organisation or the planning of lessons. However, this approach can have a tendency to see teachers as an oppressive, monolithic force, defined in opposition to pupils. I am, therefore, also concerned to draw upon the experiences of individual teachers and their personal accounts of teaching and learning in the field of sex education. I see this as an important element in developing an understanding of current practice in contexts where both teachers and pupils may have investments in the construction and maintenance of symbolic boundaries in this area.

The study aims to contribute to academic debate and practitioner knowledge in the field of sexuality education. The research brings together different bodies of literature relating to sexuality and society. Firstly, socio-historical approaches to sexuality are considered, particularly the work of Jeffrey Weeks and Michel Foucault. Secondly, psychoanalytic approaches to sexuality are drawn upon, particularly Freudian and Lacanian theories. These two bodies of literature are cited and utilised, respectively, to provide a specific context for the empirical work and as a way of exploring issues of subjectivity and psychic processes. Researchers working more directly in the field of sexuality and schooling are discussed throughout the study. It is anticipated that the study will contribute to a third, emergent body of literature concerning sexuality and schooling (eg. Epstein & Johnson 1994; 1998; Mac an Ghail 1994; Redman 1994; Sears 1992). My contribution to this newer literature will facilitate an analysis of sexuality and contemporary schooling in ways that develop our understanding of heterosexuality as a

dominant category, and have implications for policy and practice in this field. The following sections discuss in more detail the literature on sexuality that I have found generative for this study in order to give some indication of my own theoretical positioning. This is followed by an outline of some key debates and features in contemporary work on sexuality which will suggest further ideas and concepts informing the study. Finally in this chapter, I will describe the context in which the research took place and give some brief biographical details to make clear my interests and experience in the field of sexuality and schooling and the ways in which the personal has shaped my approach to this research.

Socio-historical approaches

Among authors who take a socio-historical perspective to the study of sexuality, the work of Jeffrey Weeks (1977; 1981; 1985; 1986) has been significant in shaping the ways in which sexuality can be viewed and studied. His influential study, *Sex, Politics and Society* (1981) provides a comprehensive and scholarly analysis of sexuality as a historical concept which has been formed by many different forces and has been subject to complex historical transformations. Weeks (1986) points to some of the difficulties of understanding sexuality in contemporary culture, suggesting it has become a:

transmission belt for a wide variety of needs and desire: love and anger, tenderness and aggression, intimacy and adventure, romance and predatoriness, pleasure and pain, empathy and power (Weeks 1986: 11).

For Weeks the powerful feelings produced by sexuality indicate that the realm of the sexual is laden with assumptions which are deeply embedded

in Western culture. These assumptions convey notions that sex is a natural force, takes place between members of the opposite sex and that through sex we are 'expected to find ourselves and our place in the world' (1986: 12). The cultural assumptions surrounding sexuality suggest that the term 'sex' can define both an act and a category of person. This approach to sexuality as natural and naturalised is one that, according to Weeks, has been endorsed by modern sexologists who have codified and thereby regulated the ways in which sexualities are lived and organised. Weeks postulates that the sexual tradition of the West offers two ways of looking: sex as dangerous and needing to be channelled by society into appropriate forms; and sex as healthy and good but repressed and distorted by society. Weeks poses an alternative to the regulatory versus the libertarian positions:

that sex only attains meaning in social relations, which implies that we can only make appropriate choices around sexuality by understanding its social and political context. This involves a decisive move away from the morality of 'acts' which has dominated sexual theorising for hundreds of years and in the direction of a new relational perspective which takes into account context and meanings (Weeks 1986: 81).

In this formulation Weeks suggests that sexual practices can be understood in relation to and, as part of, wider social relations in an exploration of the contexts in which acts become meaningful. Weeks' body of work has applied this framework productively to the study of homosexuality. In tracing the socio-historical specificities which define the 'act' and thereby the identity, the 'sodomite' *becomes* the 'homosexual' and, more recently, 'gay'. Weeks' analysis points out the powerful ways in which the delineation of sexual behaviour and sexual identity creates sexual categories which can be

defined in relation to each other. Weeks (1998) specifically acknowledges the influence of McIntosh and Foucault in the development of his approach to modern homosexuality. McIntosh's (1968) essay *The Homosexual Role*, in particular, is discussed by Weeks as a landmark study which innovatively proposed that, 'identities are made in history not in nature' (Weeks 1998: 140).

The adoption of a historical perspective in analyses of sexuality is characteristic of a number of studies which elaborate upon and utilise Foucaultian themes in this field (Bland 1995; Mort 1987; Hawkes 1996; Bristow 1997). Foucault's use of history to study ideas and institutions is, in itself, creative and unconventional (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982). Foucault's (1976) *History of Sexuality, volume 1* begins with a striking counter-narrative to the Freudian-influenced 'repressive hypothesis' which posits that the Victorian era was associated with sexual repression and inhibition. Foucault, by contrast, suggests that there has been a 'discursive explosion' on sexual matters since the seventeenth century. Discourses, in the Foucaultian sense, can be defined as ways of knowing and understanding the world. Foucault proposes that sexuality is a historical construct which is brought into being by and through discourses in fields such as as medicine, religion, law and education. Discourses evolve patterns, processes and ways of operating or, in Foucaultian terms 'discursive practices' which can be deployed to observe and define individuals and groups. Within this framework psychoanalysis can be seen as an example of a discursive practice which has emerged within a medical discourse to study and define the psychic lives of individuals. Discourses also function as 'regimes of truth', a phrase which captures the cumulative power of discursive formations in the realm of the social. From a Foucaultian perspective discourses actively create specific sexualities by turning subjects into objects

of knowledge. The creation of the 'homosexual subject' (Foucault 1976; Weeks 1981; 1986) enables certain disciplinary strategies to emerge in relation to sexual desire and personal relationships. Foucault suggests that the aim of the 'discursive explosion' of sexuality is to incorporate the sexual into the field of state rationality where power can be exercised to reinforce the state itself (Foucault 1988: 150). The power of the state, exercised through forms of governmentality, should not be seen, however, as simply repressive. Rather, power in Foucaultian terms is productive and relational; it can be administrative and regulatory but, importantly, it can also be generated from below in forms of creative appropriation and resistance.

The Foucaultian insights discussed above have informed my thinking in significant ways. Central to my analysis is the conceptualisation of education as a discursive field in which a number of discourses are in play. These discourses offer competing and sometimes contradictory ways of understanding the aims and purpose of education in contemporary society. In the domain of the sexual, for example, the discourse of the official school assumes that students are sexually innocent and in need of protection while the discourse of the informal school assumes an active and knowing sexuality manifest in peer relations and exchanges between pupils and teachers. Following Foucault I conceptualise the school as a site of discursive practices relating to sexuality which I identify as active in three areas: the curriculum; the teaching of sex education; and the informal cultures of teachers and students. These discursive practices bring into being 'the pupil'; schoolchildren who can be observed, known and categorised according to their orientation to the learning process. In keeping with a Foucaultian framework, I employ a notion of power-as-everywhere in my analysis of school relations. While I acknowledge that the hierarchical structure of schools create relations of domination and subordination in

specific ways: teacher/pupil; adult/child; male/female, my study also indicates that the realm of the sexual offers scope for the creative reworking of power in moments of activity and agency. The following section considers psychoanalytic approaches to sexuality and the ways in which they can be used to complement and elaborate upon socio-historical analyses.

Psychoanalytic approaches

A different approach to understanding sexuality is through psychoanalytic ideas and practices. Psychoanalysis assumes the existence of an active and insistent unconscious where repressed desires speak through the subject regardless of taboo or prohibition. Psychoanalytic theorists such as Freud and Lacan offer a framework for understanding the interior landscape of the unconscious which provides a particular perspective on human sexuality and gendered subjectivity. While it is not possible here to develop a comprehensive account of psychoanalytic theories on sexuality, I aim to outline and discuss particular ideas and insights from this body of literature which have influenced me. These ideas are discussed further throughout the study (see chapters 4, 6 & 8).

Freud points to the significance of unconscious 'events' in the emergent sexuality of individuals as lived and practised in the relationships they seek and become involved in. Freud looks to the early life of individuals to provide explanations of human sexuality. In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1977 [1905]) Freud postulates that child development is marked by specific psycho-sexual stages which individuals negotiate their way through on the road to adulthood. These stages from sexually amorphous baby to gendered adult can be difficult and precarious. Furthermore, Freud's notion of 'polymorphous perversity' suggests that practices which are usually seen

as deviations from the sexual norm can be viewed more precisely as stages in the development of human sexuality. According to Freud the child's resolution of the psychic dramas with key adults, characterised as the 'Oedipal' and 'castration complexes', has a direct bearing on the shaping of sexual subjectivity. Freud's analysis of child development proposes a gendered model of sexual subjectivity which is biologically marked and psychically significant as it centres around the possession or lack of a penis. Boys' resolution of the Oedipal drama involves, Freud suggests, giving up desire for the mother due to fear of castration by the father. In contrast girls' resolution of the Oedipal drama involves relinquishing desire for the mother and replacing it with desire for the father. This process of transition from female to male love object involves girls in the recognition that they do not have a penis and, therefore, have been castrated. Freud suggests that this has psychic implications for girls which he characterises, somewhat controversially, as 'penis envy' (1977: 186). Freud's analysis of child development and human sexuality has been, both, generatively received and heavily critiqued by subsequent theorists. While Lacan and Kristeva, for example, developed Freud's ideas, second wave feminists such as Friedan (1974), Firestone (1972) and Millett (1970) took issue with the biologism which they considered to be inherent in Freudian accounts and also the lack of a perspective which appreciated differences of power and social status in gender relations. Juliet Mitchell (1974), however, attempted a feminist reworking of Freudian themes, particularly the Oedipus complex. Mitchell's (1974) analysis suggests that psychosexual development, in the Freudian sense, can be understood as the social interpretation of biology rather than the inevitable fulfilment of biological destiny. Mitchell's reinterpretation of Freud gives the concept of patriarchy a psychic dimension by suggesting that societal laws for the exchange of women in marriage also constitute an unconscious dynamic of the Oedipus resolution. Mitchell's contribution to

analyses of sexuality lies in the insight that women's subordination in sex-gender relations is not only ideological but is also reproduced at the level of the psyche.

Lacan elaborated upon Freud's ideas and also drew upon the work of structuralist anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1966; 1969) to suggest that the unconscious is structured like a language. Lacan (1977) uses the term 'Symbolic Order' to refer to the ways in which society is regulated by a system of codes, signs and rituals which individuals internalise through language in order to take their place in society. Rosemarie Tong (1989) provides a succinct definition of this process in operation:

the Symbolic Order regulates society through the regulation of individuals; so long as individuals speak the language of the Symbolic Order - internalizing its gender roles and class roles - society will reproduce itself in fairly constant form (Tong 1989: 220).

Lacan proposes a process of psychosexual development which falls into three stages: the pre-Oedipal phase where the child experiences itself as fluid and boundariless; the mirror phase where the child begins to recognise boundaries between Self and Other; finally the Oedipal phase which is marked by separation from the mother and entry into the world of language and rationality which Lacan terms the 'law of the father'. Lacan suggests a gendered asymmetry in the internalisation of the Symbolic Order; while boys *become* subjects through the taking on of dominant codes and values, girls' relationship to the Symbolic Order is more difficult to assimilate and places them at the periphery of this system. Lacanian insights have been utilised in productive ways by feminist theorists who have further explored

issues of sexuality and the unconscious (see Mitchell & Rose 1982). As Mitchell and Rose (1982) point out, the concept of the phallogentric order and the status of the phallus and the 'feminine' within the Symbolic continue to be abiding concerns in literary and psychoanalytic approaches to feminine sexuality.

Using psychoanalysis alongside a Foucaultian analysis may, at first sight, appear problematic. Foucault demonstrates that discourses shape our knowledge of the self and notions of 'self' can be seen as subjectively constituted by theories of the self. Foucault further suggests that the psyche is transparent and that meanings of the self are less important than the methods used to understand it (Hutton 1988). A Freudian framework, by contrast, suggests that the self and the psyche can be known and understood through therapeutic practices and, furthermore, that knowledge of one's sexuality can be empowering for individuals. These seemingly contradictory ways of looking at individuals and society are brought together in aspects of my study as a way of developing issues of subjectivity within discourse analysis (see chapter 8 for a further discussion of these issues). My use of psychoanalytic ideas indicates that unconscious dynamics and associations at the level of the psyche may be important to our understanding of social relationships. In adopting this approach I am drawing upon the work of Henriques et al. (1984) and Walkerdine (1990) in which poststructuralist understandings and psychoanalytic insights are successfully combined in order to theorise issues of subjectivity and desire. The work of Valerie Walkerdine and its impact on my thinking is discussed in more detail below. The following section of this introduction considers some contemporary approaches to sexuality from a social science perspective. This section outlines some salient features in contemporary analyses of sexuality as well as highlighting points in the literature where

these features come under scrutiny in moments of debate and contestation.

Contemporary approaches

Contemporary approaches to sexuality have been concerned to apply poststructural, psychoanalytic and postmodern perspectives to the domain of the sexual. The application of recent social theory to the realm of sexuality has produced a vast body of literature, ever expanding and diversifying, which indicates that this field of academic enquiry can be seen as a burgeoning and productive area of debate and analysis. Feminist thinking on sexuality, as Stevi Jackson (1996) points out, has conceptualised the sexual domain as a site of male power in which the erotic can be understood in cultural terms as a product of gendered patterns of domination and submission. The work of theorists such as Dworkin (1981) and MacKinnon (1983) on sexual violence and pornography can be seen from this perspective as grounded in feminist political activism and invested in social change.

Carol Vance (1995) assesses the impact of understanding sexuality from feminist perspectives as culturally mediated rather than biologically given. Vance suggests that social construction theory has been important to analyses of sexuality in the following way:

Social construction work has been valuable in exploring human agency and creativity in sexuality, moving away from unidirectional models of social change to describe complex and dynamic relationships among the the state, professional experts and sexual subcultures (Vance 1995: 42).

A key feature of contemporary analyses has been a concern to explore the

relationship between gender and sexuality in social spheres. Vance suggests that social constructionism offered a way of uncoupling gender and sexuality which, she postulates, began with Gayle Rubin's (1975) pathbreaking essay, *The Traffic in Women: notes on the 'political economy' of sex*. Rubin's account demonstrates the ways in which fraternal interest groups have historically exercised control over women's sexuality through patterns of kinship and reproduction. Rubin's analysis suggests that gender and sexuality become linked through patriarchal systems which commodify women's bodies as carriers of a biological sexuality. Within this schema women's capacity to reproduce becomes a recognisable part of the 'sex/gender system' whereby women can be exchanged between fathers and husbands in ways that prescribe female sexuality and gender relations. Rubin concludes her analysis by postulating that while sexual systems take place in the context of gender relations, gender and sexuality are not the same thing. Rubin calls for the need to separate gender and sexuality analytically in order to accurately reflect upon the ways in which sexuality is socially organised. In a later essay Rubin (1984) elaborates upon the social organisation of sexuality and the discontinuities between kinship based systems which fused gender and sexuality and modern forms of sexuality. In *Thinking sex: notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality* (1984) Rubin asserts that human sexuality is not comprehensible in purely biological terms as biological explanations cannot account for the variety of human sexualities. Like Weeks (1977), Rubin (1984) acknowledges the centrality of social specificities to contemporary analyses of gender, sexuality and embodiment, 'any encounter with the body is mediated by meanings that culture gives to it' (Rubin 1984: 276).

Carole Vance (1984) further explores the analytic separation of gender and sexuality in her work on female sexuality and desire. Vance postulates that

gender systems have traditionally urged women to make a bargain with men; being sexually 'good' in order to be protected. The social and psychic effects of this bargain place pleasure and safety in opposition to each other and act as an internalised control on female desire. Vance suggests that the domain of sexuality presents a challenge to feminist enquiry as it involves recognising and dealing with difference. For Vance, female sexuality is diverse, life-affirming and potentially empowering. Vance recognises and points to the relationship between fantasy, behaviour and the development of an agenda for social change. Finally, Vance's analysis of sexual pleasure and danger emphasises the political potential of sexuality by indicating that sexuality can be understood as a site of struggle where sexual pleasure can be regarded as a fundamental right and where women play an active part as sexual subjects and agents. The following section discusses a paradigm shift in contemporary analyses of sexuality which has been referred to as the 'queer turn' (Seidman 1998).

Turning Queer

A key shift in contemporary analyses of sexuality can be seen in the impact of queer theory, commonly associated with the writing of Sedgwick (1990; 1994), Dollimore (1991) and Butler (1990; 1993). Tim Edwards (1998) defines queer as:

an attempt to undermine an overall discourse of sexual categorisation and, more particularly, the limitations of the heterosexual-homosexual divide as an identity (Edwards 1998: 47).

Queer theory employs poststructuralist and postmodern insights to the field of sexuality to indicate that the heterosexual/homosexual binary, pervasive

in activism and analysis can be deconstructed in ways that suggest creative possibilities for sexual politics and practice. As Ann Brooks (1997) points out queer theory involves the political and theoretical rejection of Western liberal homosexuality as a form of constraining difference premised on notions of rights and identity. The move from identity politics to queer involves shifting the focus from sexual minorities to a consideration of sexual majorities, specifically the politics and practice of heterosexuality. Looking at the dominant rather than the decentred involves an analysis of the power and fragility of heterosexuality as a sexual category which exists only in relation to that which it opposes. Jeff Weeks (1998) discusses the queer turn in the following way:

the perverse is the worm at the centre of the normal which gives rise to sexual and cultural dissidence and a transgressive ethic which constantly works to unsettle binarism and to suggest alternatives (Weeks 1998: 146).

Butler (1990) and Sedgwick (1990; 1994) suggest that homophobia is intrinsic to contemporary heterosexual masculinities. Sedgwick (1990) develops the premise that the 'closet' can be seen as an 'epistemology'; a way of organising knowledge/ignorance in relation to the sexual which gives shape to the centrality of heterosexual-homosexual relations. Butler's (1990) analysis focuses on gendered identity and develops a critique of the modernist notion of identity and its associations with rational, developed forms of selfhood. Butler (1990) proposes a less tangible conceptualisation of identity as gendered 'performance' which gives the illusion of substance but does not exist outside of the performed act. For Butler there is no pre-given subject or, to use her terms, no 'doer behind the deed' (1990: 25). Rather, gender identity achieves the *appearance* of subjective personhood through the

sustained enactment of performances. The notion of performance, however, does not necessarily imply depoliticisation; Butler uses the example of cross-dressing to suggest that queer theory is connected with activism and specifically the politics of transgression. The emergence of queer theory is also associated with new modes of analysis, in particular the move away from historicism, empiricism and sociological methods and the embracing of other theoretical approaches such as literary criticism, linguistics-based semiotics and psychoanalysis. While queer theory has been commended for its contribution to theoretical debate (Seidman 1998), it has also been critiqued for its lack of political engagement with the social world (Adam 1998; Edwards 1998). Despite Butler's claims for transgressive political acts, Edwards (1998) postulates that queer theory offers little potential for the development of communitarian politics and fails to make links with other forms of discrimination or, indeed, other forms of radical activism. Despite Seidman's (1998) assertion that British researchers haven't taken the queer turn, my work has been influenced by queer theory in significant ways. In an earlier study (Nayak & Kehily 1996) we applied Butler's notion of performativity to an analysis of the peer group practices of young males. Our study argued that the homophobic practices of young men in school can be seen as a psycho-social performance which is enacted and repeated to create the illusion of a coherent heterosexual masculinity. Our analysis illustrated the ways in which the fraught exhibition demonstrated in homophobic performances can be understood as a technique for the expulsion of homoerotic desire from the Self onto Others. Through such performances, we argued, young men in school sought to conceal fears of being gay and assert themselves as heterosexual and masculine. In this study I draw upon Butler's ideas more extensively to suggest that gender can be seen as performative in the context of student sexual culture. Chapter 5 in particular develops an analysis which argues that female friendship

groups provide a performative space for *gender displays* which can be seen as constitutive of a collectively negotiated femininity. Chapter 6 develops this argument in relation to male peer group cultures to explore further links between gender, sexuality and embodiment. Furthermore, the study as a whole has been influenced by the queer imperative to deconstruct the heterosexual-homosexual binary in ways that explore relations of power in the domain of the sexual. In this respect the focus of the study is upon the school as a site for the production of heterosexualities which, I suggest, can be seen as both powerful and fragile in the on-going struggle to achieve and maintain a dominant sexual category.

The work of Valerie Walkerdine

While contemporary approaches to sexuality discussed above have formed the backdrop to my work in this field, the writing of Valerie Walkerdine has had a particularly direct impact on my thinking and the ways in which this study is shaped. Walkerdine's body of writing from 1981 - 1989, collected in *Schoolgirl Fictions* (1990) explores many of the themes I have been concerned with throughout this ethnographic study. Subjects such as child development, the relationship of sexuality to pedagogy, practices of femininity and popular culture are explored and analysed by Walkerdine in creative and original ways. Walkerdine's body of work is also concerned with the academic mode of production and ways in which subjects are researched and written about. Central to Walkerdine's work is a compelling mode of reflexivity, creatively employed in the interweaving of autobiographical reflections and social research. As a working-class woman Walkerdine is keen to hold onto a notion of social class that exists not only a taxonomy for the location of position and status but also as a psychic location for the formation of gendered subjectivity. Walkerdine's use of contemporary social theory and psychoanalysis contributed to the ways in

which I thought about and researched issues of sexuality and schooling. I viewed Walkerdine's body of work as politically informed writing and thinking which was generative in its analysis and innovative in its method; as such it provided me with inspiration and desire.

In *Sex, Power and Pedagogy* (1981) Walkerdine discusses the transformative dynamics of power in a nursery school classroom. Walkerdine's analysis indicates that 'male sexual discourse' can be seen as a resource that boys can draw upon and use against female teachers. In the now famous exchange between Mrs Baxter and two four-year old boys, the boys enter into a discourse which gives them the power to disrupt pedagogic discourses predicated on 'universals' of child development and female nurturance. Walkerdine's analysis points to the contradictions inherent in pedagogic strategies and practice where male power can be recuperated as 'natural' rather than oppressive or problematic.

Pedagogic themes and their relationship to femininity are further explored in *On the regulation of speaking and silence: subjectivity, class and gender in contemporary schooling* (1985). Drawing on Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Walkerdine suggests that schools can be seen as sites for the production and regulation of the modern concept of the individual where logocentric discourses of rationality set up the irrational (female) other as its opposite. Through such discourses schools define what knowledge is and what the 'child' is, in ways that produce systems of categorisation, individuation and self-regulation. However, these processes are mediated through the presence and practice of female teachers. Walkerdine concludes that, [t]he self-regulating citizen depends upon the facilitating nurturance, caring and servicing of femininity' (1985: 237). *Post-structuralist theory and everyday social practices: the family and the school* (1986a) discusses further

contradictions to be found in contemporary schooling. In this essay Walkerdine explores the ways in which girls can be pejoratively defined and pathologised by pedagogic discourses. Turning her attention to childhood sexuality, Walkerdine suggests that dominant discourses produce a fiction of 'the child' as sexually sanitized and safe from the contaminating world of the sexual:

The 'universal and natural' child is the one for whom sexuality is central but left behind on the path toward rationality. In later formulations, neither gender nor sexuality is mentioned and we are left with a de-sexualized, safe, self-disciplined child on the road to autonomy. But the desexualized child is constructed as a fiction in the fantasies and desires of adults for safety (Walkerdine 1986a: 73).

As Walkerdine points out, this fantasy overlooks or, rather, displaces the sexual desire of adults for children onto an image of childhood innocence. Walkerdine suggests that, in particular, it is female sexuality, manifest in girls' engagements with popular culture, that is seen to constitute a threat to the moral order of school and a disruption of the rational educative process. The recourse to notions of childhood innocence in pedagogic discourses has the effect of turning displays of sexuality into something which is 'forbidden, hidden and subverted' (1986a: 73). Girls' relationship to the erotic and the eroticisation of girls in our culture is further developed by Walkerdine in a subsequent study, *Daddy's Girl* (1997).

In *Femininity as performance* (1987) Walkerdine pursues the rationality/femininity opposition in relation to specific features of gendered subjectivity. Walkerdine discusses women's troubled relationship with

achievement and femininity as a psychic struggle in which women frequently equate success/ability in the academic domain with a loss of femininity at the level of the Subject. Drawing on poststructural and psychoanalytic theories, Walkerdine suggests that women develop complex conscious and unconscious configurations for dealing with the 'unbearable contradiction' (1990 [1987]: 144) of performing academically and performing as feminine. Elsewhere in the thesis I discuss Walkerdine's analysis of girls' engagement with popular cultural forms through the *Bunty* comic [see Chapter 5]. Walkerdine's account of the methodological implications of social research developed in the study *Video replay: families, film and fantasy* (1986b) is also discussed later [Chapter 8].

As I have indicated, Walkerdine's body of work has been particularly generative for my research as it is concerned with the exploration of similar themes and approaches to sexuality, schooling and popular culture. Unlike the body of literature on sexuality discussed above, Walkerdine's analysis is frequently based upon an 'in-school' account of social and psychic processes. This engagement with children and teachers in school provides Walkerdine with a specifically grounded insight into educational discourses and pedagogic practice. A further point of identification for me is Walkerdine's biographical reflections on her working-class childhood and the experience of social mobility through educational achievement. The pain and desire associated with this trajectory has particular resonance for me as a working-class girl who has followed a similar path. In the following sub-section of this chapter I discuss other school-based approaches to sexuality which have had a significant impact on my thinking and, in turn, have shaped the contours of this study.

Approaches to sexualities and schooling

As noted above, my approach to researching issues of sexuality and schooling draws upon an emergent body of literature in this field (eg. Britzman 1995; Epstein 1994; Epstein & Johnson 1994; 1998; Haywood 1996; Mac an Ghail 1991; 1994; Redman 1994; Sears 1992; Trudell 1993). While much of this literature is discussed throughout the thesis, here I want to highlight some features of this work that provide a starting point for my analysis.

Recent analyses of sexualities and schooling recognise the educational arena as a site for the production of sex-gender identities. This conceptualisation represents a break with earlier approaches which viewed schools as *reproducers* of dominant modes of class, gender and racial formations (see Whitty 1985 for a discussion of these issues). The theoretical shift from reproduction to production takes into account Foucaultian insights into relations of power in which social categories are produced in the interplay of culture and power. Power, moreover, is discursively produced, not only as a 'top-down' dynamic but also created locally in sites such as school. Within this framework school cultures can be seen as active in producing social relations which are contextually specific and productive of social identities. Another concern of contemporary analyses in this field is the uncoupling of sex/gender. In this respect there is a recognition that school policies and practices traditionally treat gender and sexuality as if they are inextricably linked where one bespeaks the other. The prizing apart of the sex-gender couplet in recent research allows for a more nuanced analysis of masculinities, femininities and their relationship to sexuality. The growth of work on masculinities (eg. Connell 1995; Mac an Ghail 1994) has been important in this respect and suggests new ways of looking at schools as productive of sex-gender hierarchies. Mac an Ghail's (1994) study in particular takes a deconstructive approach to masculinities to illustrate the

ways in which sexual identities are connected with and spoken through other social categories of class and race.

Contemporary analyses of sexuality and schooling have taken place within the context of rapid and far reaching educational change. These changes, associated with the New Right legislation of the 1980s and 90s, effected the organisation of schools and the implementation of the curriculum. The changing political climate in school is discussed in more detail in chapter 7. Here, however, I want to note that within the framework of educational change, schools, teachers and teaching became the object of public critique and accountability. The mood of blame and exposure pervasive in the field of education during this period has been referred to by researchers as productive of 'discourses of derision' (Ball 1990). This notion of schools and teachers as culpable has provided the context in which this study has taken place. Inevitably this has had an impact on the research, even though I was not focusing on issues of policy or school effectiveness. In the next section I describe the way in which I negotiated access to schools and carried out research to accommodate the changing political climate in educational settings. This is followed by a final section where I provide an autobiographical account of my experience as a sex education teacher in a secondary school. Aspects of my biography are included here in order to illustrate some of my personal investments in research in this field.

The study

The fieldwork for this study was carried out over a total of two years, beginning in 1991 and continuing in 1995 and 1996. Ethnographic research was conducted in two secondary schools in different parts of the UK. I had been interested in issues of sexuality and schooling for many years, firstly as a teacher and secondly, as a postgraduate student at the Department of

Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham. Sexuality and schooling became the focus for my Masters dissertation, *'Tales we heard in school': sexuality and symbolic boundaries* (Kehily 1993) and I was keen to explore these issues further in a thesis. For some of the reasons outlined above, gaining access to carry out research in schools was not easy. Several schools I contacted during the early stages of the project did not want to participate in research in this field. In negotiations with these schools I felt that staff were preoccupied with issues such as local management of schools and the implementation of the national curriculum and were also anxious about issues of sexuality and sex education. Senior staff in particular were fearful of 'bad publicity' and were concerned to keep their school out of the headlines in areas which they considered to be 'controversial'. In order to gain access to schools I drew upon contacts I had made as a teacher and, more recently, as a contract researcher at the Centre for Educational Development and Research (CEDAR), University of Warwick. Through personal contact with teachers who were known to me I was able to carry out ethnographic fieldwork in two schools, one in the West Midlands area (Oakwood School) and one in a large town in the East Midlands area (Clarke School). Negotiations with both schools were based on the understanding that my research would not bring the school into disrepute and that pseudonyms would be used in written papers and reports to protect the identity of the school. In one school I was able to offer support for staff who taught Personal and Social Education and, additionally, I provided feedback on the research and discussed the implications for sex education in the school.

Both schools were open access secondary schools for boys and girls aged 11-16 and both schools served a largely working-class catchment area. Oakwood School was non-denominational and racially mixed with many

pupils from south Asian and African-Caribbean backgrounds. Clarke School, however, was a Church of England school and the school population was mainly white. In both schools I formed closely binding relationships with pupils, especially girls between the ages of 14-15. In Clarke School in particular, I felt that students in the school associated me with certain groups of girls with whom I had developed a relationship during the research period. In order to speak with more boys in school I supplemented the ethnographic fieldwork with focus group discussions at an all-boys secondary school in a large city in the south east of England. This school was also accessed through personal contact with a senior teacher in the school who described the student population to me as 'very mixed' with a high percentage of students from African Caribbean, mixed heritage and south Asian backgrounds. Field relationships with students and methodological issues associated with researching sexuality in school are explored further in chapter 8.

'Stop teaching sex education or reconsider your position in the school'

From January 1979 until July 1990 I had a teaching career. It wasn't much of a career, that is to say it wasn't particularly well planned, organised or developed but it was what I did for over a decade. It took up most of my time and a great deal of my energy. In the next chapter I discuss my personal and political investments in teaching through the retelling of specific incidents that occurred during my first two years as a newly qualified teacher. Here, however, I want to note that my approach to teaching and my identity as 'teacher' was a politicised one. In common with other activists on the left during this period, I saw the teaching of English, sex education and anti-racist education as sites for political activity and social change. In 1982 I was teaching English and Personal and Social Education at a secondary school in the West Midlands. The PSE curriculum

included sex education for Year 10 and in these pre-National Curriculum days teachers were free to teach their subject in whatever way they chose. Or so I thought. After a few weeks of teaching sex education to a Year 10 class the headteacher summoned me to her office and presented me with an ultimatum, 'stop teaching this or reconsider your position in the school'. Apparently some students from another Year 10 class had complained that their sex education lessons (with the Head of PSE) were not 'as good' as my lessons and the students requested 'proper' sex education like the Year 10 class I taught. This incident makes me sound like a dangerous radical educator with an agenda of sexual liberation. However, I should stress that, despite the politicised identity, nothing terribly radical was going on. I had borrowed some resources for sex education from the Brook Pregnancy Advisory Service and had been following their guidelines and using their material throughout. I regarded my approach as 'safe' and non-controversial, even a little unadventurous. Besides, I was too busy and too tired to think up new and exciting ways of doing 'sex ed.' every week. The headteacher's response, however, suggests that the troubling and contentious status of sex education extends beyond the actual pedagogic practice involved and also pre-dates issues of public accountability and marketisation introduced by the legislation of the late 1980s. Sexuality, it seemed to me, aroused anxieties in school and I found it challenging to think about why this might be so. In the following chapter I explore in more detail the development of my interest in teaching sex education and the contradictory subject positions involved in being a teacher and a political activist.

CHAPTER 2

Fragments from a Fading Career: personal narratives and emotional investments

Introduction

In this chapter I aim to document the personal journey by which I became interested in researching issues of sexuality and schooling. Something which has now become an academic quest did not start out as such.

Through the use of personal narratives drawn from my career as a teacher, this chapter will illustrate the ways in which my present research interest is inextricably linked to my biography as a teacher and my political and emotional investments in certain forms of pedagogic practice. The style and scope of this chapter is indebted to contemporary feminist analyses which embrace auto/biographical modes of social research and stress the importance of self-reflexivity to the process of fieldwork and analysis (see Reissman 1993; Stanley 1990; Walkerdine 1986b). The chapter is also shaped by a reading of Jane Miller's (1995) critical commentary on the autobiography of the question which discusses the complex relationship between personal investments and research agendas.

Educational routes and biographical moments

Like many people in the final year of my undergraduate degree I 'drifted' into the idea of doing a Postgraduate Certificate in Education. It wasn't so much a conscious decision to become a teacher, more an unconscious and unspecified panic about what to do at a more general level. Contemporary 'lifestyle' lexicon refers to these moments as 'life choices' and 'career planning'. I don't recall thinking about it in such clearly defined ways but I do remember that education appeared an obvious 'choice'. I had been to school, I knew about it and in a strange way it felt safe and challenging at

the same time. At this stage my musings on 'what makes a good teacher' and 'what is education' were inevitably related to my personal experiences of schooling.

My journey to school was a short one, only ten minutes walk away, but in my mind it was another country. It wasn't like home or anywhere else I'd ever been. I don't remember the teacher's names or the content of any of the lessons but I do remember what my teachers looked like, what they wore and whether they smiled or frowned. The significant others in my school life were the teachers who didn't explode into a fury for seemingly no reason. They were the ones who didn't instil me with fear. The teachers I admired were the ones who inspired me but weren't afraid to criticise. They encouraged me to push ideas further, explore details, ask difficult questions. Based on this partial and personal retrospective, good teachers, I decided, were the ones who had a vision that went beyond the curriculum and beyond the boundaries of the school walls. Education was about making a difference, making a difference to people's lives. In the development of this home-spun philosophical position I was assisted by my involvement with student and socialist/feminist politics during the 70s and a generally haphazard and incomplete reading of literature concerned with the politics and practice of radical pedagogy (e.g. Freire 1972, Illich 1971, Bowles & Gintis 1976, Searle 1974).

With my philosophical position 'sorted' and my commitment to 'making a difference' firmly intact, I began a teaching career in January 1979. My first appointment was as an English teacher in a comprehensive school in West Bromwich. To explore some of the feelings, themes and complexities of this period I have employed the concept of 'memory-work' (Haug, 1987); a method of research whereby participants narrate aspects of their lives in

order to analyse the relationship between the personal and broader social structures. The stories that follow are my selected recollections of the years 1979 - 1981, when, as a newly qualified teacher, I was attempting to establish my career, develop ideas about pedagogic practice and hold on to a personal vision. The use of memory-work to generate stories is intended to produce different layers of meaning, understandings and reconstructions of identity relevant to the research process. Past and current version(s) of self are juxtaposed to develop a reflexive and critical relationship between individual concerns and broader social, political and cultural issues (Reissman 1993, Stanley 1990).

Just call her Rat-face

The fourth year class I inherited in my first year of teaching were 'out of control'. They were 'difficult' when I took them over and 'completely off the rails' by the time they left me. Teachers in the school had a whole vocabulary for describing such pupils and such classes. It was a language I felt uncomfortable with at first but found myself using, initially with a hint of irony and, in time, as a matter of course. It became a way of communicating frustrations to other teachers, allying with them and drawing a sharp distinction between what it means to be a teacher and what it means to be a pupil. 4Z, it was generally acknowledged, were an 'unholy bunch', 'a shower of shits', 'as high as kites' and 'off the planet'. Sometimes they were referred to as 'retards', 'cretins' and 'toe-rags'. Occasionally they were called 'seriously disruptive'.

I wanted to win them round, believed I could win them round if I persevered. Controlling them would be an achievement but

teaching them that English could be fun was what I desired. After only a few weeks I settled for trying to control them. I tried every strategy I knew; being firm, being their friend, rewarding good behaviour, ignoring or punishing bad behaviour, shouting louder than them, isolating 'troublemakers', rearranging the desks, group-work, whole class-work, individualised study programmes, detentions. Nothing worked. I was inexperienced and they knew it. The battle was lost.

There was a lot of pain and hurt for me that year. On one occasion in the war between them, me and my idealism, one of them, in a moment of open resistance, called me 'Rat-face'. The whoops of laughter, banging of desk tops and unbridled excitement indicated to me that the rest of the class were very impressed by this and the name caught on in no time. Every lesson was a ritualistic humiliation, some worse than others. There was no way out.

This story of my relationship with 4Z can be seen to cohere around the themes of control, teacher identity and pedagogic practice. The story begins with the details of my 'inheritance' as a newly qualified teacher: a 'difficult' class. My notion that this was a class I 'inherited' is suggestive of the level of responsibility and ownership teachers feel in relation to their classes, a notion which is not specifically taught in training or through pedagogic literature, but is communicated informally through the culture of schools and teacher training colleges. That teachers *own* their classes is an indisputable 'fact' of teacher existence, confirmed in numerous day-to-day

exchanges ('Send one of *yours* to the office', 'One of *mine* will go', 'She's one of *Miss Green's*'). This feeling that your class 'belonged' to you and you were, therefore, responsible for them contributes to the associative link made between teaching and parenting (Steedman 1985; Walkerdine & Lucey 1989) where a discourse of control and protection operates to structure both roles. 4Z were *mine* whether I liked it or not and their decline could be directly attributed to my failure as a teacher. This is reflected in my deterministic view that 'there was no way out' - until, of course, the end of the academic year when they would be no longer mine.

4Z were a class with a 'reputation'. It was a generally acknowledged staff room 'truth', though one I resisted in the first instance. I had heard the stories teachers told about them, the catalogue of insubordination and deviance spanning four years that placed them utterly beyond redemption as 'no hopers' in the litany of the staff room. Ball (1981) comments on the assumptions teachers make of pupils based on their perceived ability, defined by the school in terms of the banding system.

As the band allocation of the pupils was a 'given', a label imposed from outside prior to any contact with the pupils, the teachers were 'taking' and deriving assumptions on the basis of that label, rather than making their own evaluations of the abilities of individual pupils (Ball 1981: 36).

As a band 3 class, 4Z were regarded as 'non academic' and in need of 'remedial attention' or as the official school discourse put it 'overcoming obstacles to learning'. It is, therefore, possible that 4Z 'acquired' a reputation in the minds of the teachers before the history of misdemeanours, where any negative event may serve to confirm teacher expectations of 'non

academic' pupils. My limited sociological understanding, combined with a politics which spoke of a sense of 'justice', produced an awareness of the power of the self-fulfilling prophecy. I did not want to be guilty of preconceived notions, labelling pupils and writing them off in ways that I could see other teachers doing. I thought that if I adopted a different approach I would achieve a different outcome. Studies of teachers, teaching and the generation of school based knowledge (e.g. Esland 1971; Gorbitt 1972; Holt 1964) led me to believe that this was the case - I had the power to change perceptions through practice. However, while this body of literature suggested the possibility of an alternative practice, the process by which this could be achieved was, and less well documented.

Geoff Whitty (1985) has commented on the ways in which the 'new' sociology of education of the 1970s tended to overstate and overestimate the potential for social change through schools. As a newly qualified teacher I had internalised this potential as a personal mission, 'teaching them that English could be fun was what I desired'. It was part of a personal and political quest I had embarked on without reference to anyone else in the school or the community. What was to be done when it became clear that my open-minded optimism was not going to transform 4Z? Can the vision be dismantled and reconstructed in a different way? Is it my problem/fault or is it that of 4Z? Does the failure of the practice necessitate the abandonment of the dream? In the story I interpret the failure as *my* skills of organising and managing a class, 4Z were quick to spot my failure, a consequence of my inexperience as a teacher. As I was unpractised in the teacherly weaknesses and exploited them to the full. This analysis, plausible to me at the time, sees teacher/pupil relations as structured by and through the free-play of interactions within the classroom, where positions are negotiated and understandings reached. Within this conceptualisation it is

possible for me to see teacher identity as open to reformulations of a positive and transformative kind, 'making a difference to people's lives'. In retrospect I realise I overlooked, consciously and unconsciously, the ways in which teacher/pupil relations are *already constructed* through the social relations of the school where hierarchies of privilege and status provide a context for the construction and negotiation of pupil and teacher identities. At a conscious level this oversight can be rationalised in terms of my resistance to the 'how it is' set-up with its negative labelling and the low teacher expectations which I saw as maintaining and perpetuating class relations and educational mediocrity. At the level of the unconscious there may have been other forms of resistance: the difficulty of recognising different and contradictory subjective investments and the need to forge a coherent identity invested in resolving contradictions through the 'unitary' identity of *teacher*.

Within the story, the shifting formations of my teacher identity can be located in my feelings regarding the language used by teachers to describe 4Z. I didn't know the word 'discourse' at the time, but I felt 'uncomfortable' with the epithets used and was concerned to define myself *as against* the popularly held assumptions and beliefs relating to band 3 pupils. Such a position, however, was difficult to sustain within the context of the school, where discursive patterns extended beyond any individual attempt at disavowal. To communicate my experiences and frustrations to other teachers I found myself using the same language as they used, 'initially with a hint of irony and, in time, as a matter of course'. Here, I make a transition from defining myself *as against* other teachers, where I refuse to acknowledge and own my power as a teacher to define pupils in negative terms, to an acceptance of the teacher identified discourse which assimilates teacher concerns through the ~~O~~thering of pupils. This process can be seen

as central to the formation of my 'unitary' teacher identity expressed in the story through the language of warfare which permeates the rest of the narrative. The lessons become sites of 'battle', I use 'strategies' to 'control them' and loss of control can be detected in 'open resistance', 'humiliation' and defeat.

'Rat-face' is not the worst thing I've been called, though, in the story it signifies a great deal of pain and hurt which may appear disproportionate to the term of verbal abuse used. Here, it is the context of the classroom which gives the name-calling event its emotionally loaded significance. Carolyn Steedman (1985) comments on the claustrophobic world of the classroom as a place of anticipation, where events are observed and dramas staged. With 4Z I viewed this theatricality as their constant public appraisal of my performance as a teacher. The display of *teacher* involves a specific enactment: maintaining control, not losing 'face', not exposing weaknesses. Investing in and performing a 'unitary' identity such as *teacher* involves expelling doubts and vulnerabilities which may call your authority into question, for the duration of the lesson, at least. Pupil perceptions, however, may be different. Bronwyn Davies (1983) notes how classroom order is reliant on pupil co-operation. In not responding to teacher 'authority', pupils may register an unwillingness to collude in practices which invest teachers with the power to 'control' them in the classroom. This complexity within the notion of control, where mutual recognition establishes classroom order, contrasts sharply with my early conceptualisation. As a newly qualified teacher I felt that establishing my teacher credentials within the school involved the demonstration of control over a class 'controlling them would be an achievement'. My failure to control 4Z in terms that I understood creates the conditions for the 'ritualistic humiliation', the public loss which exposes vulnerabilities and signifies a breakdown in the 'unitary'

identity of teacher.

This analysis, however, does not account for the ways in which teacher vulnerabilities are often seen in terms of physical, gendered embodiment. Mrs Baxter in Walkerdine's (1981) study, Ursula in Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and many other teachers, real and fictional, have a tale to tell, a moment of hurt and exposure when they are symbolically undressed/violated by their pupils. Pupils' interest in the physicality of teachers can be seen, in part, as a deliberate and defiant inversion of school values which prioritise 'mental' capacities over the physical and corporeal (Willis 1977; Shilling 1991). While male and female students may challenge teachers in this way, the gendered dynamics of these exchanges suggest that there may be specifically sexual ways of 'looking' for (male) pupils in the observation of female teachers. The sexualised nature of the 'look' where looking is structured through a lens of power and desire (Fanon 1967) presents a challenge to the dominant power relations of the school where male pupils are involved in the sexual appraisal of female teachers. Within the context of the classroom, the 'male gaze' may be discursively constructed *as against* other school based discourses such as child-centred pedagogy (Walkerdine 1981) and teacher as *knower*, in control of, and *owner* of her class. Chris Shilling (1991) comments on the importance of the body to human agency and the attainment and maintenance of status:

the management of the body through time and space can be seen as the fundamental constituent in an individual's ability to intervene in social affairs and 'make a difference' in the flow of daily life (Shilling 1991: 4).

Within the context of the classroom the assertion of 'body' over 'mind' by

pupils can be seen variously as a transgressive act signifying the pleasure of resistance, the othering of teachers and bonding of pupils and an attempt to reformulate classroom relations in ways unanticipated by teachers. The ability to 'make a difference' from the perspective of pupils may operate in opposition to teacher notions of 'making a difference'. In the event of being called 'Ratface' by a male pupil, the opposing differences are symbolically located upon the body of the teacher where pedagogic practices, however 'radical' or 'critical', can position teachers simultaneously as powerful and powerless in the lives of pupils.

Lose control/maintain control

Happily, not all classes were like 4Z. 3Y, by contrast, were 'lively', 'bright' and 'highly motivated'. For most teachers in the school there was a direct and self evident correlation between intelligence and behaviour. Put in very crude terms, intelligent pupils were well behaved or at least open to 'reason' and responsive to disciplinary routines. Poorly behaved pupils and persistent offenders were 'thick'. This dichotomy permeated all school relations and, while I wanted to challenge it, I didn't know how to and all my best efforts failed.

While 4Z came to represent the first serious blow to my idealism and expectations, I was busy cultivating 3Y as a personal success story. 'Ideas into practice - it is possible', I thought. Maintaining control seemed to be working with this class and I was beginning to feel confident enough to try to make English lessons 'fun', stimulating and enjoyable. I'd never whole-hearted agreed with maintaining control anyway. It contradicted my ideas on radical pedagogy and the central

idea that education was also about liberation - making a difference. With this class I wanted to resolve the contradiction. Here, I was keen to risk radical pedagogic practices and student centred approaches, discovery learning, small group discussion groups, less teacher led material. I thought it could work with this class and I needed it to work. Then, at least, I could preserve some of my earlier values, albeit in a much modified form. Well, I was wrong. I made a terrible and irretrievable error of judgment. It was a complete disaster.

Moving to a less formal structure was a difficult adjustment for 3Y and the lack of teacher intervention in small group activities produced a myriad of disputes and conflict among members of the class. Of course, I hadn't anticipated this and the effort of developing different 'control' strategies when I wanted to be progressive, free and facilitative wore me out. What was an OK, if limited, pupil-teacher relationship degenerated into a series of minor skirmishes, battles and, on one occasion, open confrontation. At the end of the summer term, exhausted and emotionally drained, the nightmare pierced through day-light and I completely lost control of the class. They rampaged through the classroom, throwing books, paper and bags at each other with rapturous glee. Felt pens became missiles and when the excitement of that wore off they started writing on the desks, walls, display work and each others shirts and blouses. Order was restored by the Deputy Head teacher, known to all the pupils as 'Granny Green-Teeth', an ex-grammar school mistress in her 50s who knew there was something suspiciously different about me and now had all the proof she

needed.

Maintaining control became a central preoccupation in my first year of teaching. Well, in many ways it wasn't so much the desire to maintain control as the fear of losing control. Losing control of the class came to signify something more than the temporary shortcomings of a newly qualified teacher.

Although I could not have articulated it at the time, I recognise the fear now as about a form of psychic damage, a personal loss, an abandonment of Self. So the investment in maintaining control was being played out on many levels, socially, emotionally and psychically. My self styled formulations and expectations of what teaching and education was all about was leading me into dangerous and uncharted territory. Everyone was a visitor here and it didn't feel very welcoming.

This story of my relationship with 3Y elaborates on the theme of control introduced in the 'Ratface' story. Here I am concerned with the tensions and contradictions between the ideology of radical pedagogy and my attempt to put some of the ideas into practice. 3Y were a band one class and, according to the discourses of the school, much more could be expected of them. Differences between classes and the teacher centred discourses which sustained them were rarely acknowledged in the radical pedagogy literature (e.g. Anyon 1981; Shor & Freire 1988; Giroux 1988) . Within this body of literature a binary of oppression/liberation operates to structure school relations in ways that suggest the school can be seen as a site for the oppression of pupils, and liberation is possible through teacher intervention. Here the teacher as radical educator recognises inequality and, through the adoption of radical pedagogic strategies, aims to 'empower' students.

Empowerment is generally seen in liberal democratic terms, giving students a voice, creating an awareness of inequality and offering participatory practices for social justice and change. The institutional power which produces differences between groups of pupils, such as the ways in which 4Z and 3Y were perceived by teachers, is not recognised by a literature that speaks of injustice as a monolithic force and liberation as a counter force.

Ellsworth (1994 [1989]) refers to the assumptions, goals and practices of critical pedagogy as 'repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination' (1994: 301). Her critique draws attention to the ahistorical and depoliticised context of critical pedagogic practices where an overwhelming rationalism suggests that equality can be created within the classroom while school relations remain hierarchical. From this perspective power imbalances can be seen to exist within and between students and teachers. My story, however, suggests that as a practitioner wanting to be 'radical' and 'critical', I was not driven by the rationalism of the project. Rather, my 'ideas into practice' can be seen as a form of idealism, a personal and political vision I had emotionally invested in and was reluctant to lose. Recognising the impossibility of the vision would signify the loss of self and the pain of redefinition. 'I thought it (radical pedagogic practice) could work with this class and I needed it to work' indicates that I was not ready for the psychic struggle involved in disengagement and loss. In retrospect, I realise that the romanticism was also imbued with a residual moralism. This was about what was *right* and what was *wrong* in a fundamental way; my rights and their wrongs, a powerful notion of what is 'better' and what can be.

With 3Y 'I was keen to risk radical pedagogic practices' to maintain the emotional investment I had made. The use of the word 'risk' suggests that this decision, although compelling, involved an element of insecurity where

the process and the outcome could not be predicted. Developing radical pedagogic practices involved a range of 'student centred approaches, discovery learning, small group discussion, less teacher led material'. Ellsworth (1994) identifies three strategies for critical pedagogic practice: 'empowerment' of students through skills sharing and reflection, 'dialogic teaching' where the teacher becomes a second stage learner through sharing knowledge with students and 'emancipatory authority' where power imbalances are accepted in the quest for democratic practices and shared human interest (1994: 307-8). These clearly outlined strategies contrast sharply with my 'approaches' which appear underdeveloped and ill-defined. My attempt at radical pedagogy was a more haphazard 'have a go, hope and let's see what happens' endeavour, where the implications for myself and students had not been considered.

Furthermore, in pursuing radical pedagogies I did not consider the context of the school which shaped and gave meaning to these activities. Issues of democracy, equality and justice, as developed by radical educators, were not apparent when other teachers in the school spoke about their classroom practice. Neither did they surface during departmental discussions, parents' evenings or staff meetings. Within this context my attempt to bring about change can be seen as a marginal and isolated activity, unlikely to make sense to pupils (or other teachers) at the level of everyday experience. The disputes and conflicts that ensued among pupils indicate that changes in pedagogic practice need to be planned and coordinated to harmonise with other school-based practices. The naivete of my attempt at social change illustrates my lack of understanding of schools as networks of social relations where competing discourses and institutional arrangements provide a context for possibilities and constraints.

Investing in radical pedagogy involves a commitment to changing consciousness and a belief that students can achieve full consciousness through developing an awareness of the 'banking concept of education' (Freire 1972: 46). In this critical engagement 'the project of liberatory pedagogy requires a subject who is an object of our emancipatory desires' (Lather 1991: 141). My idea that 'education was also about liberation' articulated a desire to change the consciousness of pupils, while I remained unwilling/resistant to shift my own consciousness as framed by the Freirean vision. This one-way dialogue within the classroom conflates many complex issues regarding the concerns and possibilities of liberatory education in a mass education system. Radical pedagogy can be seen in two ways: as an educational ideology, a way of thinking about education, and also a practice concerned with the micro-politics of teaching and learning. The conflation of these two themes within my conceptualisation of the emancipatory education agenda confused aims and practices in a personalised and overarching idealism. James Donald (1985) suggests that the process of schooling is incapable of producing the specific and identifiable social and political outcomes cited by educational ideologies:

it is the *failure* of education to be functional to any one strategy that not only explains the rise and fall of educational ideologies, but also provokes shifts in policies, new strategies for organising schools and learning, new (or recycled) visions of what education might utopianly do (Donald 1985: 216, italics as original).

My pursuit of the ideal, however, did not consider the broader limitations of emancipatory education. I was more concerned with the immediate and direct classroom responses where student centred approaches seemed to

provoke widespread intra-pupil rivalry and discontent.

The desire to be a radical educator and to simultaneously establish myself as a competent teacher in the school contributed to the contradictory consciousness I identify in the story. The key contradiction at this time hinged round the issue of *control* which I perceived as the external imposition of a dominant will over a subordinate one. This did not sit comfortably with my ideological investment in emancipatory education. As Donald (1985) points out, many of the rituals and routines of schooling 'cannot always be explained in terms of ideology' (1985: 217). Drawing on Foucaultian theory, Donald illustrates the ways in which the nineteenth century monitorial school system employed the disciplinary technologies of hierarchical observation and surveillance to regulate and control pupils. This had the normalising effect of producing regimented, self-policing subjects or 'docile bodies' (Foucault 1977). The policing of pupils by schools, where the education of the working class is combined with specific forms of disciplining, moralising and dispensing welfare, can be seen as the exercise of 'bio-power' (ibid), a modern technology for the organisation of the population. From a Foucaultian perspective the daily organisational routines of school - assembly, the timetable, bells, rules governing spaces such as corridors and playground - can be seen as mechanisms for the control of pupils. However, as a teacher with an alternative agenda, I felt these mechanisms also served to control and regulate me, to define my place within the school and establish my responsibilities in relation to teachers and pupils.

Within the context of the story, *control* can be seen to operate on many levels: the dominant ideologies controlling the pupils, school hierarchies controlling me, me controlling the pupils, the pupils controlling me and the

pupils controlling each other. By contrast, my fantasy of the radical vision was to see schools as sites for the development of *self control*, boundaries created by individuals for the protection of themselves and others and formed in dialogue with collective decision making processes. I experienced the multiple and competing forms of control as a contradiction between what I wanted to achieve and what seemed possible. As I was emotionally invested in the desire rather than the ontological reality, the contradiction could not be sustained for very long. This psychic splitting manifested itself in my 'preoccupation' with control where losing control and maintaining control, the thought and the eventuality, became loaded with symbolic significance. The psychic dynamics involved in my anxieties around control indicate how school contributes to the production of subjectivities where unconscious structures can be played out and realised. My investment in the 'unitary' identity of teacher, the radical pedagogue who can be part of the system and work against the system at the same time, was a delicately balanced fantasy where the 'fear of losing control' can be seen as a fixation, the locus of anxieties, revealing the coming into consciousness of psychic struggle. Within the story I identify the fear as concerned with 'a form of psychic damage, a personal loss, an abandonment of Self'. At the level of external social relations, this can be interpreted as my fear of losing my place in a structure which places me and in which I place myself. However, it can also be seen as an internal dynamic engaged in the attempt to achieve a coherent identity. The vulnerability and exposure signified by the fear of losing control indicates that coherence is unattainable due to the workings of the unconscious. Losing control of 3Y and having 'order restored' in the classroom by the Deputy Head I defined myself against became a moment of recognition for me that the contradiction I thought I could 'resolve' through radical pedagogic practice was also a tension *within* myself. The 'theory into practice' contradiction was inextricably intertwined with the burden of

contradictory subjectivities, the investment in a particular identity and the struggle to maintain and promote it against other aspects of the Self. Here there was no identifiable 'solution'.

Kehily is a bitch

This story is from my second year as a teacher. Having failed in spectacular fashion to develop my ideas and resolve contradictions, I embarked on a series of compromises. Control was paramount and radical content could be fed into a formal structure. Radical pedagogic practice, though still desirable, was not possible at the moment. I didn't know when it would be possible but I was happy to get through every day and keep the nightmare at bay.

This year I was given a C.S.E. English class and a list of exam board regulations concerning required reading, course-work and standards to be met to gain the qualification. I spent many hours working out how to make the course interesting and capable of incorporating oppositional politics, while meeting the regulations. Video material and drama were permissible if documented in certain ways. Creative writing could count as course-work. Devising new and exciting approaches became a personal project. A way of compensating for the earlier failures perhaps? Well, anyway, I didn't have time to worry about all that now. This was fine, it was going well in fact. Then one day I walked into the classroom to find the message KEHILY IS A BITCH in letters so large they covered one wall of the room. This was followed by a note on my car which said 'FOOK OFF'. What was wrong now? Had I meted out some terrible injustice

to one of them, some of them or all of them? Or was I so preoccupied with the 'success' of the course that I hadn't noticed the groundswell of resentment and dissatisfaction? Or was I a bitch who should just fuck off?

This story presents the deferral and containment of the contradiction(s) as a temporary, if inadequate, coping strategy. I was very busy, under pressure, I had to go to school everyday and do the best I could. Under such circumstances it was understandable that I should settle for survival as 'a series of compromises'. These compromises manifest themselves as a commitment to the subject specialism of English. Within the context of the late 70s and early 80s, the teaching of English was promoted as a liberal and potentially liberating activity by practitioners and educational theorists (see Searle 1974). This broadly radical framework was reflected in the literature of professional bodies such as the National Association of Teachers of English (NATE) and the Association of Teachers of African, Caribbean and Associated Literature (ATCAL). It was also apparent in the textbooks, anthologies and educational materials of the time.

The Penguin English Project (first published 1973), for example, produced anthologies of literature, contemporary writing and art aimed at secondary school pupils. The books were organised around themes such as 'Work' and 'Identity' and were presented in three stages appropriate to age and level of experience. A reviewer of the series commented:

Unhappy the teacher who cannot structure the teaching situation so that oral and written expression springs spontaneously from the challenge to the mind, the kindling of the senses and the heightening of the emotions that these books

provide (Saxby, H.M., *Reading Time*, quoted in Barrs, M. (ed.) *Identity* 1973: back cover).

As a collection the books presented the diverse and often disembodied writings of poets, novelists and cultural critics, without comment or contextualisation, as a resource for teachers and pupils to explore. As the reviewer indicates, it is the responsibility of the teacher to organise the teaching in order to bring the pupils to a heightened awareness of their senses and emotions. Another popular anthology of poetry, *Touchstones*, compiled by Michael and Peter Benton (1971) was published in five volumes and widely used in secondary schools. In *Touchstones 5* the editors' preface for teachers states:

We regard it as essential that pupils should not only read poems but try to write their own and come to grips with their own feelings and experiences in this way ... we have suggested topics for discussion and writing which give children the chance either to show a wider social awareness or to come to terms with more complicated ideas and feelings; the sections on love and war should help here (Benton, M. & P. 1971, ix-xi).

English teachers were encouraged to view their teaching as a creative endeavour where giving pupils the 'tools' to articulate their experiences was seen as empowering *in itself* and a key step in the development of critical awareness. This awareness, however, was framed by a teacher-mediated set of cultural values which actively promoted a literary canon and defined responses to, and appreciation of, the work. As a philosophy underpinning the teaching of English, it is possible to see these practices as working with a more progressive Leavisite notion of culture being 'good for you', a

humanising and civilising force.

Working within this framework as an English teacher committed to liberatory education, I began to see the subject specialism of English as the means by which radical pedagogic aims could be achieved. As Perlstein (1995) points out, it is possible to see this reorientation as an example of the discipline regulating and *disciplining* those who work within its boundaries:

The disciplinary gaze sees but cannot be seen; it is panoptical, and thus is assumed to be transcendent and not to issue *from* anywhere... All discipline becomes a version of self-discipline; those who transgress discipline's codes have no voice through which to speak (Perlstein 1995: 132).

However, at the level of the subject inscribed in discourse, I did not experience disciplinarity as a pervasive, regulatory force; rather it represented something I was searching for, a framework giving my practice meaning and a way of looking that I actively and willingly embraced. The teaching of English gave legitimacy to my ideas of radical pedagogy by facilitating the incorporation of 'progressive' material into an established structure. This way of working appealed to me as a practice which was possible, a 'do-able' alternative to the unattainable dream. The project, though attractive to me, did not capture the imagination of the pupils in the way I assumed it would. The graffiti and the note on my car illustrate the tensions and differences between pupil and teacher perceptions. From the perspective of pupils I was a teacher with specific expectations of them, making demands and producing an agenda for them to follow. The radical content of the syllabus, which made such a difference to me, made seemingly little difference to their experience of the lessons or the

curriculum subject. The possible was becoming impossible again.

The following story is also from my second year of teaching and illustrates some of the gaps between the curriculum and the lived experience of pupils.

The girl in the toilet

One day in my class a girl said she didn't feel very well and asked if she could go to the toilet. In the toilet she gave birth to a baby. The event shocked everyone in the school. It wasn't long before teachers were constructing their own version of the incident which usually made some pronouncement on the girl and her actions. These included; 'she was irresponsible', 'she didn't know she was pregnant', 'she didn't want to admit she was pregnant', 'she thought that if she ignored the pregnancy it would go away and now she's got more than she bargained for hasn't she?' and, finally, 'how did she get away with it?' None of the teachers, including myself, made a link between the event and the school.

I'm not sure when I became aware of the connection, if indeed there was a moment of awareness. However, I developed a growing interest in the teaching of sex education, ways of learning about sex in and out of the curriculum and gender politics among teacher and pupil cultures. If a girl gives birth in the school loo, the school must have something to do with it, I thought.

This incident really happened. I have to keep telling myself this as, the longer I am away from teaching, the more it feels like a mythic tale, a story

often repeated by teachers in the staff room to demonstrate the depravity and Otherness of young women in the school. As I indicate in the story, teachers did not regard the sexuality of pupils as within their jurisdiction. Neither was it perceived as part of the 'hidden curriculum', the unofficial and unacknowledged teaching and learning of the school. Rather, sexuality and the sexual behaviour of pupils was seen as a social issue that proliferated *beyond* the boundaries of the school. *It* happened elsewhere and was not linked to the curriculum or the ways in which teachers related to sexual issues. This way of looking contained and concealed contradiction; teachers *knew* at the level of everyday experience that sexuality infused and informed many social exchanges.

Within the classroom words such as 'shaggy' and 'knob' could produce enough hilarity to disrupt the classroom order for the duration of the lesson. I recall scanning all teaching materials in advance so that such moments of disruption could be avoided. A colleague of mine, concerned to illustrate some grammatical point, wrote 'Your pen is red' on the chalkboard. Seeing the words 'pen' and 'is' next to each other produced mass laughter and all hopes of grammatical correctness had to be abandoned. The 'Carry On' style humour of the classroom, where innuendo and double entendres became a source of shared mirth (Epstein & Johnson 1994), was also present in the staff room. Allusions to sexual activity - having sex, thinking about sex, associations with sex - also made teachers laugh, about each other and with each other. This seemed especially salient at certain times such as Friday afternoons and the end of term, when a period of intense pressure was drawing to a close. Invoking sexual matters as a way of 'letting off steam' and as a source of humour indicates that teachers and pupils operated within a framework where sexuality was regarded and related to as cultural taboo; a deeply 'private' matter to be dealt with publicly at the

level of a 'joke'.

In the story I identify the girl giving birth in the school toilet as a starting point in the development of my interest in sex education. The connections between the event and the school can be seen in different ways; firstly, as having implications for the teaching and learning of sex education, secondly, as a moment of recognition that teachers and pupils occupy separate 'cultures' and finally, as a potential site for the restructuring of a political agenda. My interest in these strategies appeared, at the time, as a continuation of my concern with emancipatory pedagogy. Sex education offered the potential to develop relationships with pupils and 'make a difference' to their lives. It did not lead to a formal qualification and, therefore, was not subject to the regulatory requirements and constraints of an external examination board. This aspect appealed to me as I thought I would have autonomy over classroom content and teaching methods. In retrospect I realise I was busy reshaping the education for liberation agenda within a different political arena - sex education rather than English teaching. Although the shift begins to acknowledge and work with a different notion of politics, my commitment to the 'dream' appears as unshakable as ever. My reluctance to relinquish an internalised vision reveals the extent of the emotional investment in a particular identity and the psychic struggle involved in 'letting go'.

The link between *The girl in the toilet* and the other stories included in this chapter can be seen in terms of my concern to recuperate the sex education curriculum within my personal version of critical pedagogic practice. In this respect the narratives represent an attempt to create a linear progression through time where my career as a teacher can be articulated within the context of the development of certain historically specific teaching and

learning strategies. Collectively the narratives present incidents and events in sequences which become infused with moments of drama. The narratives can be conceptualised as dealing with moments of heightened dramatic action where unusual events contribute to the 'tellability' of the tale. Labov (1972) refers to such narrative structures as seeking to ward off the question 'So what?' (Labov 1972: 370). The 'So what?' question provides listeners with a way of evaluating and interacting with the story through active engagement with the point of view presented by the narrative form. This question also haunts my own evaluation of my fading career where the fragments can be seen as part of a process to explore this period in my life in terms of aims and intentions. The lingering of the 'So what?' question in relation to the stories presented in this chapter suggests that such attempts at self-exposition are ever partial and incomplete, selective fragments in accounts which simultaneously reveal and conceal.

Concluding comments

In this chapter I have used memory-work to generate a selection of personal narratives from my first two years of teaching. In the production of personal narratives, time and memory become key agents in the shaping and telling of the tale. Often seen as a selective process, memory is capable of huge lapses and almost visionary moments of clarity (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1982). Memory frequently takes on the role of 'fixing' events in the past. However, this stasis can be seen as temporary state, since memory is an active process, constantly working and reworking personal experiences. Hollway (1989) comments on the contextual contingency of personal narratives:

people's accounts are always contingent: upon available time
and discourses (the regimes of truth which govern the way

one's thinking can go), upon the relationships within which the accounts are produced and upon context (Hollway 1989: 39).

Different memories can be triggered by different contexts. In my own stories I realise I have focused on the dramatic tales of oppression, censure and failure and present them as a linear quest for an ideal. The narrative accounts can be seen to move through the formulation and redefinition of a personal vision: change the school, change the English curriculum and pupils experience of English teaching and finally, change personal relationships through sex education. The stories draw upon those moments of pain and humiliation where the contradictions associated with radical pedagogic practice are exposed. Collectively, the narratives present the desire for the ideal fused with the impossibility of this being realised. This selective remembering overlooks the moments of success and recognition (yes, this happened also) and the many other events which enhanced, disrupted and fragmented my career as a teacher. The prioritisation of certain accounts over others involves an active engagement in the process of identity construction, a way of making sense of the past within the context of the present. The shaping of experience in this way can be seen as a dialogue between identity, sense of self, and identities, those aspects of the self that seek social recognition (Kehily 1995). Finally, I feel that it is important to note that the personal narratives I recount are, of necessity, representations constructed for the sake of my argument. The stories are, literally and metaphorically, fragments which create a certain *version of identity* reflexively concerned with ways of understanding my career as a teacher. I do not want to suggest that there is an essential 'truth' about myself in relation to teaching and learning which can be re-covered through memory-work. Rather, I hope to suggest that there is a relationship between subjective investment(s) and pedagogic discourses which speaks to us, in

disparate voices, of who we are and who we want to be.

This chapter has sought to provide an account of my early interest in sex education as a secondary school teacher with investments in critical pedagogy. Memory work is utilised to offer a glimpse into biographical experiences which I regard as formative moments in the genesis of this study. The following chapters deal specifically with my experiences as a researcher. Chapter 3 seeks to provide an approach to ways of understanding the school as a social site. Based upon a close reading of Foucault's (1976) *History of Sexuality volume 1*, chapter 3 aims to provide a context through which subsequent chapters can be read and interpreted.

CHAPTER 3

Producing heterosexualities: the school as a site of discursive practices

Introduction: approaches to sexuality and schooling

It would be less than exact to say that the pedagogical institution has imposed a ponderous silence on the sex of children and adolescents. On the contrary, since the eighteenth century it has multiplied the forms of discourse on the subject; it has established various points of implantation for sex; it has coded contents and qualified speakers... [t]he sex of children and adolescents has become an important area of contention around which innumerable institutional devices and discursive strategies have been deployed (Foucault 1976: 29-30)

Modern sexuality, from a Foucaultian perspective, can be understood as a historical construct; the product of particular discourses which are articulated around a cluster of power relations. The development of mechanisms to talk about sex in fields such as religion, medicine, criminal justice and education was underpinned by a notion that sexuality was a thing to be known and spoken in the 'public interest'. Foucault links this shift from taboo to 'discursive explosion' in the sexual domain as central to the emergence of 'population' as an economic and political problem. From this perspective the sexual conduct of a population becomes an object of classification, administration and regulation. The deployment of discursive strategies in relation to sexuality can be seen to demarcate the terrain for the production of sexual identities. In this schema the hysterical woman, the homosexual, the masturbating child, the sex worker can be viewed as actively generated by discourses of sexuality. In the modern era, discourses

of sexuality offer a complex means of policing the person, where individuals are represented as containing a sexually constituted internality which can be accessed and monitored. Central to a Foucaultian analysis is the position of the family and, particularly, the heterosexual married couple as a site for the recognition and regulation of sexual activity.

Looking at Foucaultian ideas within the context of contemporary schooling, what can we say about issues of sexuality and schooling? This chapter is concerned with the application of a Foucaultian perspective in order to identify the discursive strategies that may be deployed within the school setting. Here the school can be understood as a site where a nexus of discourses in relation to sexuality are articulated and struggled over; moral/ religious, medical, political and cultural. The chapter is particularly concerned with the ways in which these discursive formations produce sexual identities within school settings. The chapter suggests that sexualities are produced within the school and inscribed in discursive practices which are normatively heterosexual. In this respect the interest is in the *processes* which are constitutive of dominant practice; school routines and procedures situated within the curriculum and pedagogic practice which serve to shape and consolidate heterosexual relations. The chapter identifies and explores three discursive practices which serve to shape sexualities in school settings: the official curriculum; pedagogic practice and pupil cultures.

School practices create a particular context for the production of sexualities and sexual identities (Epstein & Johnson 1994; 1998; Mac an Ghail 1994). As I indicated in the first chapter, the everyday social practices which constitute school culture create boundaries in relation to issues of sexuality: teacher/pupil; public/private; adult/child; male/female (see Kehily & Nayak 1996). These boundaries demarcate the terrain for sexualities where

certain features appear visible and acceptable while others remain inadmissible and even deviant or offensive. The establishment of boundaries in the domain of the sexual provides the possibility for multiple transgressions. In the social arena of the school, sexuality can be seen as a *playground* for pupils to negotiate and resist the dominant values of the school. Pupil sexual cultures, often defined in opposition to the official curriculum, frequently utilise sexualised themes as vehicles for humour where teachers are humiliated and school authority can be flouted. Pupil sexual cultures also offer a site for the production of masculinities and femininities, where sex-gender identities can be contested, displayed, made and remade. The following section considers some key features which emerge in different literatures on heterosexuality in order to provide a context for focusing on heterosexuality in school.

Approaches of heterosexuality

The normative power of heterosexuality referred to by many writers points to some of the difficulties that arise when researching a dominant sexual category. The 'natural' status of heterosexuality makes it a slippery topic to grasp for critical inquiry and focused analysis. Given the taken-for-grantedness of heterosexuality, it is perhaps unsurprising that the challenge to the dominant sexual category has come from those who do not circumscribe to its regulatory boundaries. Stevi Jackson (1996) suggests that feminist approaches to heterosexuality can be defined in terms of three main strands of thinking and writing: patriarchal approaches which stress the centrality of male dominance; historical approaches which foreground the variability and plasticity of sexuality; and finally, approaches which emphasise subjectivity and the formation of individual desires. The dominant and structuring presence of heterosexuality has encouraged Adrienne Rich (1980) to identify it as a political institution with the coercive

power to make male-female fucking a part of 'compulsory' existence for women. From a similar lesbian-feminist perspective, other writers have discussed the relationship between male violence and heterosexual practices in educational arenas (see Jones & Mahony 1989). The focus of this work has been upon the structural connections between heterosexuality and patriarchy, and the oppressive effects this has upon the lives of women and girls.

From a different viewpoint, other writers have considered the relationship between masculinities and heterosexuality (Herek 1987), and applied this to the English State schooling system (Haywood 1996; Mac an Ghaill 1994). R.W. Connell (1995: 104) has used life history case studies to illustrate that 'compulsory heterosexuality is also enforced on men'. In this reading heterosexual relations of power may carry costs for men as well as women, in an acknowledgement that 'the male body has to be disciplined to heterosexuality' (ibid). In an article about heterosexual practices, Wendy Hollway (1988) deploys discourse analysis to address masculine experiences of heterosexual relationships. In a frank and fascinating account Hollway considers, firstly, why she has been able to feel powerful in heterosexual relationships, and secondly, why men have experienced her as powerful. Consequently, she goes on to explore 'why men feel similarly intense, irrational and vulnerable' in heterosexual relationships (1988: 125). More recently, Hollway (1995) has discussed the positive possibilities of reconfiguring heterosexuality, and the potentiality for such a project to become a site for the pleasure and empowerment of women.

A complex approach to questioning contemporary heterosexuality can be found in some psychoanalytic inflected studies drawing on Freud's notion of the human subject as neither gay nor straight but 'polymorphously

perverse'. The language of psychoanalysis has provided a new vocabulary for thinking through the formation of heterosexual identities by engaging with concepts such as projection, splitting and internalisation to understand homophobia as an internal and external dynamic relationship (Nayak & Kehily 1997). The psychoanalytic term 'homophobia', has itself helped problematise the oppressive styling of masculine heterosexualities by shifting the focus from 'Other' to 'Self'. Richard Johnson explains:

Heterosexual identity is constituted by an imaginary expulsion of homosexual desire which is externalised as Other, as Not Me. Imagined, actively held at bay as well is some version of the 'feminine'. But this is not the end of the story, for expulsion is, in one sense, in vain, because heterosexual male identity needs an internalised version of the feminine and must handle the confusions of the homosexual in order to preserve the ongoing sense of difference (1996: 183).

So, the homosexual is not only the deviant 'out there' but is also 'in here' creating troubling anxieties for heterosexual male identities. The ebb and flow that occurs within this psycho-dynamic nexus, suggest that heterosexuality is always worked at and struggled over in a relentless effort to be 'kept safe' from the enemy within.

In recent analyses contemporary writers have sought out new ways for understanding heterosexuality as, simultaneously, an institution and a set of specific situated practices (Richardson 1996; Wilkinson & Kitzinger 1993). Wilkinson and Kitzinger's (1993: 25) collection aims for 'more rigorous and sophisticated analyses of heterosexuality' in an attempt to theorise how heterosexual relations shape women's lives, gay and straight. By 'making

explicit the silent term' (1993: 5) heterosexuality, the editors see this analysis as necessary to the development of feminist politics, and a key move in the field of psychology. Meanwhile, Mac an Ghaill (1996) has applied a deconstructive method to the study of heterosexualities in an understanding that '[i]n English schools there is a tendency to see questions of sexuality as something primarily to do with gays and lesbians' (1996: 193). This mode of deconstruction is used to dismantle the normative position of heterosexuality by 'shifting from a focus on sexual minorities to a critical engagement with sexual majorities' (1996: 204). Haywood (1996) similarly writes of heterosexualities in the plural, paying careful attention to the multiple discursive positions that different young men attempt to occupy when styling their sexual identities. Richard Johnson (1997) further explores approaches to heterosexuality in his introduction to the work of the Politics of Sexuality Group, University of Birmingham. Johnson's analysis of discussions within this group trace the critique of heterosexuality 'from power-invested differences, to their instabilities and policing, to defensive, recuperative or transformative strategies' (Johnson 1997: 15). The shifting ways of viewing heterosexuality in the group suggest both the enduring and ever-changing nature of this sexual category.

A third strand for the contemporary critique of sexuality, referred to by Jackson (1996), has come from 'queer theorists' working to decentre the normative presence, privilege and practice of heterosexuality. Judith Butler has written about the 'performativity' of gender and 'the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence' (1990: 137). In Butler's analysis gendered/sexualised identities are consolidated through a 'heterosexual matrix' of power in the effort to evade 'gender trouble'. These diverse approaches to the study of heterosexuality are not always empirically distinct but may combine a variety of perspectives and approaches. As part

of the recent encompassing of heterosexuality within academic debates outlined above, this study hopes to contribute to an understanding of sexual majorities by focusing on the processes which are constitutive of dominant practice in educational settings. The analysis synthesises many insights from the approaches outlined above to offer an ethnographic interpretation of heterosexualities within different discursive spaces in school.

Discursive practices: the official curriculum

Heterosexuality as a social reality seems to be invisible to those that benefit from it. In part this is because of the remorseless construction of heterosexuality as natural. If things are natural they cannot really be questioned or scrutinised and so they fade from view. Such naturalisation often characterises how we see, and don't see, the powerful, how they see, and don't see themselves (Dyer 1993: 133-4).

Heterosexuality is largely assumed and unnamed within the context of the school. When teachers and pupils talk about sex they are implicitly talking about heterosex. The pervasive presence of heterosexual relations and the simultaneous invisibility of its structure makes heterosexuality normatively powerful in the lives of teachers and pupils (Epstein & Johnson 1994). Its 'natural' status as a dominant sexual category gives it a taken-for-granted quality referred to by Richard Dyer. School relations are organised around the assumption that heterosexuality is the 'natural order of things'. An effect of the naturalisation of heterosexual relations is widespread homophobia, with homophobic practices often treated as routine everyday activities, particularly among male peer groups. Unlike other discriminatory practices (eg. sexism, racism), homophobic abuse is rarely treated as an equal opportunities issue, is not seen as a disciplinary offence and does not usually

find its way into school policy documents.

Within the school the naturalisation of heterosexuality offers an invisible structuring presence to the curriculum which can be seen in school policy documents. As noted above, Clarke School is a non-selective Church of England secondary school for boys and girls aged 11-16 in the East Midlands area of England. The school population is predominantly white working class, with a small percentage of students from middle-class (usually church) backgrounds. There were also a small number of African Caribbean, South Asian and mixed heritage students at the school. The Church of England affiliation described in the school's statement aims 'to provide a high quality education in a committed Christian environment, in which the love of God is central and young people are valued and nurtured to achieve maximum potential'. This broad Christian ethos permeates most school policy documents relating to curriculum content and social issues such as bullying. In the sex education policy this is articulated in the following way:

As a Church of England school, particular emphasis and consideration will be placed on the views of the Church towards teaching in this area. Our sex education will be appropriate to the pupils' age, experience and special needs. It will emphasise that personal and family values are important. The moral, ethical, religious and cultural dimensions of young people's lives should influence all approaches to Sex Education which will be presented within a moral, family oriented and Christian framework (Clarke School Sex Education Policy, October 1994).

The discursive strategies deployed at the level of school policy inscribe heterosexual relations within societal institutions of the Church and the

family. The mobilisation of moral/religious discourses in relation to sex education are cited as an 'ideal' overarching framework which allows sex to be thought about and spoken about in particular ways. Within this schema legitimate sexuality is confined to the heterosexual married couple, the conjugal family where certain 'values' can be regulated and reproduced. More specifically, the parents' bedroom becomes the 'single locus of sexuality' (Foucault 1976: 3), the one place where sexual activity is recognised as permissible. The Christian perspective embraced by Clarke School at the level of the official curriculum links 'the love of God' with the care and nurture of young people where the purity of ascetic devotion is connected to a concern for the protection of the young. The stated aim that '[o]ur sex education will be appropriate to the pupils' age, experience and special needs' indicates that sexual learning is premised on a notion of physical and emotional development, an adult-formulated taxonomy of what pupils need to know and when. As Sears (1992) points out, official school discourses on sex education, the delivery of programmes and criteria for effectiveness, reflect a techno-rational worldview which rarely relates to the world of adolescent sexual activity.

Foucault's analysis points to the many ways in which discourses aimed at restriction in the field of sexuality frequently have the unintended effect of producing the opposite. The Christian pastoral tradition sought to produce specific effects on desire; in confessing to the weakness of the flesh one achieved spiritual reconversion, 'turning back to God, a physical effect of blissful suffering from feeling in one's body the pangs of temptation and the love that resists it' (Foucault 1976: 23). Such practices, Foucault suggests, extend the boundaries of sexual discourse through the public disclosure of hitherto unspoken desires. In this way acts of prohibition and censorship produce and enlarge the very things they seek to deny. It could also be

argued that such acts of confession play a significant part in the constitution of the Other within oneself, heightening desire by producing the 'forbidden' internally within the Subject and revealing it in an attempt to overcome it. It is possible to see the homophobic practices of young men and the concern with sexual reputation among young women and men as part of this economy of desire where social regulation and internal struggles are enacted in contextually specific discriminatory rituals.

At the level of the official curriculum, school policy documents can also be read through the lens of institutional anxieties. Here, it is possible to see the concerns of school hierarchies as 'problems' to be managed. From this perspective the school population becomes a body to be controlled and regulated. In a site where large numbers of young people interact, the sexual conduct of pupils becomes a matter for surveillance and intervention. Foucault outlines the ways in which secondary schools of the eighteenth century were preoccupied with sex, as displayed in the architectural layout of the buildings, disciplinary procedures and organisational structures. Here, the sexuality of children was addressed directly:

[t]he internal discourse of the institution - the one it employed to address itself, and which circulated among those that made it function - was largely based on the assumption that this sexuality existed, that it was precocious, active and ever present (Foucault 1976: 28).

In particular, Foucault suggests, the sex of schoolboys is regarded as a public problem requiring vigilance, moral guidance and medical intervention. The proliferation of discourses aimed at sex and specifically the sexuality of adolescents, although aimed at restriction and confinement, can be seen to

increase awareness of sexual matters and thereby serve as a further incentive to talk about sex. At the level of the official curriculum in Clarke School, the incitement to discourse in relation to issues of sexuality can be understood as a strongly imaginary project involving investments in an ideal of heterosexual coupledness and Christian guardianship which can be shared and taught. The ideal is, of course, a statement of how things should be, the approved and preferred form, and also a projection of how school officials would like things to be, a fantasy of virtue and holiness.

Discursive practices: pedagogy

This section will consider the ways in which school policy documents are translated into everyday practice through pedagogic strategies employed by individual teachers. The religious inflection of school policies was publicly supported by the staff and school governors, many of whom were involved in churches in the locality. Specifically, this section will focus upon the teaching of Personal and Social Education (PSE) at Clarke School.

Responsibility for this area of the curriculum was undertaken by one senior member of staff who planned the syllabus and taught 18 of the 22 PSE classes timetabled each week. The remaining four classes were taught by two other members of the senior management team. PSE was a compulsory part of the curriculum for all classes from Year 8 onwards and occupied one forty-five minute period per week. Mrs Evans, the teacher responsible for (PSE) at Clarke School, was a practising Christian. She had worked at the school for many years as a Physical Education teacher and more recently had taken responsibility for the coordination of PSE throughout the school.

In an early meeting I had with Mrs Evans she explained that the PSE curriculum adopted a Christian perspective. During this discussion she spoke favourably of a teaching pack called *Make Love Last*, produced by a

Christian organisation to impart the message that it is acceptable to 'say no' to sex¹. Mrs Evans commented that it is important for young people to realise that they could 'say no' and that choice in contraception did not necessarily involve engagement in sexual activity (Fieldnotes 9.10.95). Mrs Evans saw this as an 'empowering' message for young women and her use of the notion of 'empowerment for girls' suggests that she is also aware of this as a particular feminist message where saying no to male advances can be understood as a positive, self-affirming act. For Mrs Evans it seemed that at the level of personal practice, discourses of Christianity and feminism, could be interpreted and interwoven in a way which was specifically intended to address young women. Here, the notion of girls' empowerment can be seen to have both productive and restrictive effects. While girls were encouraged to exercise choice in sexual activity, the fact that the practice of PSE invariably focuses on young women and particularly on their reproductive capacities, reinforced their definition in terms of sexuality (Thorne 1993). This approach to sex education places being female within the asymmetric power relations inscribed in heterosexual practices where female sexuality is seen as potentially dangerous and the object of male sexual desire.

In many respects the ways in which Mrs Evans spoke of the PSE programme at Clarke School can be seen within a radical or progressive pedagogic framework. She had endeavoured to give PSE a high profile within the school and had gained the support and respect of other teachers and school

¹ This consists of a video and teaching materials available from CARE (Christian Association for Religious Education) London SW1 3YP. The video is directed by Norman Stone and Sonia Palmer. The sleeve notes of the video read, 'aimed at 14-15 year old PHSE students, *Make Love Last* presents the case for waiting for sex'.

governors. As part of her ardent search for the recognition of PSE within the school, Mrs Evans had asked the headteacher for a noticeboard in the reception area of the school which could be used to display information and helplines on social issues and local facilities such as drug use, child abuse, contraceptive advice and sexually transmitted diseases. Other teachers commented on this as a 'brave' and 'up-front' move. It is an indication of Mrs Evans' success as a teacher of PSE that she maintained the support of senior teachers and governors in the school and was singled out for commendation by officers from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) during an inspection of the school while I was conducting fieldwork. Mrs Evans described her teaching methods as 'pupil centred' where the emphasis is on pupils' awareness and understanding. Mrs Evans indicated that pupils could be regarded as a resource for learning, generating issues for discussion and exploring ideas among themselves. Her preferred teaching methods involved group-work discussion and interactive tasks with the class divided into small friendship groups for a range of activities. Mrs Evans also stressed the importance of giving pupils information and access to agencies through the use of guest speakers, videos and public health leaflets. This mode of organisation formed a central part of the PSE programme. Mrs Evans' approach to the teaching of PSE can be seen to be innovative and pioneering. She felt strongly that PSE should have the same status as other subjects in the school; like other areas of the curriculum, PSE should have a clearly planned and taught syllabus and should not be regarded by teachers and pupils as a 'doss'. Mrs Evans spoke disparagingly of 'sitting pupils on bean-bags and having a chat'; doing PSE involved engagement in important social learning and should be taken seriously.

In outlining her pedagogic practice, Mrs Evans draws upon different (and

sometimes contradictory) discourses to give PSE a coherent structure that she felt happy with. Her approach can be seen as a fine balancing act between official school policy, teacher directives and pupil-centredness. Pedagogic approaches which value pupil perspectives are often fused with points of tension and contradiction (see chapter 2 for a discussion of these themes). The adoption of aspects of progressive pedagogy inevitably involves degrees of imposition where teachers define the learning environment by saying to pupils 'this is how *I* want it to be, it's for the benefit of *us all*'. In the sex education programme at Clarke School, this feature of pedagogic practice is illustrated in relation to issues of language and the expression of sexual themes. In examples where teachers and pupils discuss sexuality, the message to pupils is 'please feel free to speak openly as long as you use the proper terms'. This insistence on correct terminology can be understood as a discursive manoeuvre which legitimises sexuality and, simultaneously, prescribes the boundaries within which it can be spoken. The use of an officially sanctioned vocabulary conveys a particular notion of sexuality which, in this case, represents an adult world of heterosexual sex spoken in 'proper' terms and preferably with reference to, and mindful of, religious and moral discourses. In such instances, language can be seen as a site of discursive struggle where certain ways of speaking and looking attempt to displace other ways of speaking and looking (see Chapter 7 for a further discussion of language in sex education teaching). Here pedagogic practice in relation to language provides a site whereby pupil perspectives and adolescent sexual cultures can be displaced and silenced. As Foucault points out, silences and acts of silencing are active processes which form an 'integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses' (Foucault 1976: 27). However, the regulation of language in formal spaces such as sex education classes does not necessarily inhibit the language used within pupil sexual cultures. On the contrary,

ways of speaking about sex among pupils may proliferate in particular ways, in part, as a response to restriction in other spheres (see Chapter 8).

Other aspects of Mrs Evans' pedagogic practice suggested that she had a well developed personal vision concerning the aims and outcome of sex education. Within this personal vision was a strong pragmatic purpose which can be seen in terms of the promotion of sexual health. Mrs Evans indicated that she saw a direct connection between the PSE programme and rates of pregnancy in the school:

Mrs Evans: When I first took over this course I was walking round town and I saw five of our girls either pregnant or pushing prams, *five of them*. Now there is only one girl in Year 11 who is pregnant so we must be doing something right... The worst year for teenage pregnancies in this school was the year of the Victoria Gillick case². We were warned off giving advice on contraception and several girls fell pregnant.

For Mrs Evans, the proliferation of discourses of sexuality within pedagogic practice produced sexual awareness and responsibility; the repression of discourses in this area led to pregnancy. Within this framework the pregnancy rate in the school could be seen as a signifier for the success or failure of the PSE programme. At this level medical discourses and moral imperatives were working together and located on the bodies of adolescent girls.

² In this much-publicised case of 1985, Victoria Gillick successfully brought a legal action against the Department of Health and Social Security to prevent under 16 year-olds from receiving contraceptive services without the knowledge and consent of their parents .

Mrs Evans' approach to PSE indicates the many ways in which pedagogic practice can be seen to produce new knowledges with potentially expansive and restrictive effects. As a practising Christian Mrs Evans is supportive of the moral and religious standpoint found in school policy documents. However, as a teacher she is committed to making the PSE syllabus relevant to the pupils in the school. Mrs Evans' concern with sexual health can be seen as a significant move in the translation of policy into practice. In the utilisation of a sexual health model for the teaching of PSE, issues such as methods of contraception, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases can be communicated directly to students to impart information in ways that may connect with their needs. The gendered implications of this practice can be seen to make young women visible in ways that are not reflected in school policy documents or official discourses. The concern to communicate sexual health messages to pupils in practice assumes and bespeaks a normative gender order where the female body is conceptualised as saturated with a sexuality which can be pathologised, regulated and reproduced. The targeting of young women through sexual health clearly produces a double discursive formation; females as sexual and females who need to know about the sexual. This construction of female sexuality as embodied and in need of regulation connects with pupil cultures in ways that reinforce heterosexual relations, while male sexuality is assumed as dominant and remains unchallenged. The effects of PSE as a practice would support Alison Jones' (1993) argument that the subject positions available to girls in school are inevitably inflected with gendered power relations in which dominant gender narratives remain uninterrupted. Other researchers have commented on the contradiction between Conservative traditionalism and discourses of public health in work on sex education policy (Johnson 1996; Redman 1994; Thomson 1994). Within this literature tensions can be identified in the recourse to moralism of traditional

Conservative approaches which are continually interposed with the need for information and discussion in the interests of sexual health. Mrs Evans' approach to sex education suggests that these tensions may also be identified at the level of everyday practice where moral perspectives and public health imperatives coexist in the teaching of PSE. Within the domain of sex education, 'public' and 'private' issues are struggled over at the level of policy and interpretively interwoven at the level of practice.

Discursive practices: pupil cultures

In this section the focus is upon the informal learning that takes place within pupil cultures and the ways in which the PSE curriculum is *received* by pupils. In this setting I am interested in the social meanings that pupils ascribe to events and the ways in which these meanings contrast and overlap with sexual learning in formal spaces such as PSE lessons. Barrie Thorne (1993) has commented on the ways in which adolescence can be understood as a period of entry into the institution of heterosexuality. Viewed from the perspective of pupils, adolescent relationships form part of a *sexual economy* where features such as attractiveness, desirability and status are commodified and played out in rituals of dating and dumping. Within the arena of these cultural practices same-sex peer groups play an important part in the mediation of ideas and exchanges which constitute these processes.

The following extracts are from a Year 10 PSE lesson where the classroom task was for pupils to complete a quiz sheet on different forms of contraceptives. I am sitting at a table with five girls - Vicky, Sophie, Naomi, Sara and Sarah and Nathan, a boy in the class. Nathan usually sat at a table near the door with a group of boys. However, for this lesson he has moved to sit by Louise who is sitting directly behind Naomi. The reason for

Nathan's change of location become clear as the lesson progresses. During the course of the lesson Nathan asks Naomi a series of questions, verbally and in the form of notes, through Louise who seems to be acting as an intermediary.

Vicky: (to me) Naomi is having boy trouble

Vicky: (to Naomi) You told me earlier that you can't stand him, what are you sending messages to him for? (in loud authoritative voice) You're playing with his emotions my dear.

[girls on table work through the questions in the quiz in fairly haphazard fashion].

Vicky: (reading) 'It is easy to teach yourself to use the natural method'. I don't know. Can you? True? (reading) 'Baby oil is good for lubricating condoms' is it? (reading) 'Hormone injections interfere with a woman's menstrual cycle' yes they do don't they?

Sophie: (reading) 'All male condoms prevent against sexually transmitted diseases'? I don't know. Is this a test? Do female condoms prevent against sexually transmitted diseases? I don't know.

Vicky: I don't know. I don't know any of this, we haven't been taught all this. (reading) 'IUDs are ideal for' - IUDs, what's IUDs? (reading) 'Condom splits on you, you can take emergency contraception'. Yeah you can.

Sophie: Yeah, 72 hours after, up to three days.

Naomi: Yeah. Louise [unclear message to Nathan].

Vicky: (to Naomi) So are you going to go out with him? You like him then? Just tell him you don't wanna go out with him if you don't wanna go out with him. Oh, (in exasperated tone) I don't wanna get involved.

In this interaction ethnographic evidence suggests that there are two different agendas operating in the classroom; the set task for the lesson, the contraceptive quiz, and the dialogue between Naomi and Nathan. Pupils are engaged and occupied by both activities, though there are seemingly no points of connection between the two. The exchange illustrates the ways in which two contrasting approaches to the power-knowledge couplet are being deployed and negotiated within the same educative space. The official classroom task sees sex education in terms of technical knowledge, details of biology and sexual health to be learned and accumulated, while pupil interactions stress the importance of the experiential and the instrumental role of the peer group in key aspects of emotional learning. The 'dialogue' between Naomi and Nathan indicates that, for them, negotiating the sexual is strongly gendered. Asking to go out with someone and agreeing to go out with someone entails an engagement with sex-gender categories which involves identity work and imperatives to act, often cast in terms of binaries: male/female, pursuer/pursued, assertive/submissive, demanding/conciliatory. In this exchange Nathan appears to be enacting boy-who-wants-girl while Naomi's responses involve her in a performance of the opposite, girl-being-chased-by-boy. Their 'relationship' is being

negotiated through an intermediary, Louise, and under the scrutiny of the female peer group. There is a strong sense of Naomi and Nathan's 'business' being public property, requiring discussion and intervention in the female peer group. This sense of collective ownership and negotiation in relation to male-female relationships contrasts with the construction of sex in PSE classes as 'private', involving two people in matters of personal choice, intimate relations and medical knowledge. The activities of the peer group indicate that sexual relations offer a sphere for discussion, intervention and regulation of sex-gender categories in school. The role of Vicky, in particular, illustrates the multiple dimensions of peer group activities. In this exchange Vicky can be seen to expose and monitor Naomi's actions and intentions, orchestrate peer group responses, adopt different voices, liaise with me and be actively involved while claiming to desire non-involvement. The activities of the peer group suggest that sex-gender categories are not fixed but, rather, are shaped by and through social exchanges which offer possibilities for expansion and regulation.

As the lesson proceeds the two activities continue with the details of the quiz being attended to intermittently, interspersed with dialogue and commentary concerning developments between Naomi and Nathan:

Vicky: She's (Naomi) just getting another note. What does it say Sara?

Sara: It says, 'So you want to go out with me in two weeks?' *De De Derrr!*

Vicky: She's told Nathan she'll go out with him in two weeks. Why d'you say you'll go out with him in two weeks?

Naomi: 'Cos Jonathan will be back then.

Vicky: You're not even going out with him though.

Naomi: I am!

Naomi (to me): I like Jonathan you see, but Nathan likes me.

MJK: So what are you going to do about it? Do you feel that Jonathan isn't so interested in you as you are in him?

Naomi: Um yeah, that's right.

Vicky: What's a matter? Why d'you tell him (Nathan) you'd go out with him in two weeks?

Naomi: I don't want to tell you. It's private.

Vicky: You tell me everything else [laughs].

Here, the interest in Naomi's affairs comes to a tentative and temporary closure. Naomi's concern to make herself available to Jonathan while holding Nathan in abeyance is a strategy which involves distancing herself from her female peer group while responding in favourable, though non-committal tones to Nathan's advances. Naomi's actions incur direct disapproval and censorship from Vicky who believes that Naomi has misplaced investments in Jonathan and is deliberating misleading Nathan. For Naomi, in this instance, maintaining girlfriends and having a boyfriend

is not an easy balance to strike and her discomfort can be seen in terse replies and the retreat into 'privacy'. In courting femininity and heterosexuality Naomi finds herself positioned by two different discourses as loyal female friend and compliant would-be girlfriend. In such moments heterosexual relations are consolidated through girl-boy encounters which involve a disruption of same-sex alliances. The link between heterosexuality and the management of social relations can be seen in Naomi's circumscribed and protracted negotiations with Nathan, Louise and Vicky in which notes, declarations, explanations and calls for privacy become symbolic signifiers in the paraphernalia of heterosexual practice.

At the end of the lesson Naomi told me in more detail that she feared her relationship with Jonathan may be over when he returns from his holiday and she may then consider a relationship with Ryan as he 'likes her'. She, however, likes Jonathan. Naomi's attempts to exercise control in this situation illustrate the limitations of sex education practice which do not engage with the 'lived' version of sexual relationships within pupil cultures. The 'just say no' message of the sex education video and the clinical knowledge of the contraceptive quiz do not address the feelings of power and vulnerability experienced by young women in the negotiation of femininity and heterosexual relationships. Naomi wants to be recognised as sexually attractive, wants to be 'liked' and wants a relationship, preferably with Jonathan. Her desire to be desired places her in the uncomfortable position of being pressured by Nathan and policed by her female peer group. As Beverley Skeggs (1997) points out, the concern of young women to validate themselves through dynamics of desirability requires the confirmation of men. Over the following weeks the dalliance between Naomi and Nathan escalated to the point where Naomi's mother came into school to speak to Mrs Evans. Mrs Evans reported to me that Naomi's

mother expressed concern about Naomi as she was being 'pestered' by Nathan and they (the family) had a terrible weekend and even had their Sunday lunch disturbed. Apparently, Nathan had been telephoning their house persistently, putting lots of money in the telephone and then when Naomi tried to end the conversation he would say, 'Not yet, don't make me waste my money'. Nathan had also followed Naomi around over the weekend when she went into town with her girlfriends. When Naomi told Nathan she wanted to spend time with her friends, he threatened to get some other girls to beat her up. Naomi's mother had told Naomi to have nothing to do with Nathan, was worried that the boy had an obsession with her daughter and that Naomi was secretly enjoying the attention. Mrs Evans also added that Nathan was sitting near to Naomi in lessons and had asked to change groups for some subjects in order to be in the same class as Naomi on all occasions. Mrs Evans decided to speak to Nathan and his mother about his behaviour and hoped that this intervention would resolve the situation. However, Mrs Evans' comments to me focused on Naomi's burgeoning sexuality,

Mrs Evans: Last year, you know, she (Naomi) wore her hair scraped back into a pony-tail and this year she's got it in tresses all over her face, she's always flicking it back and playing with it and then there's all the make-up and the [*flutters her eyes*].

Mrs Evans also commented that Naomi's mother appears to be very strict, does not allow her to have boyfriends and is clearly not someone Naomi could talk to about relationships or sexual matters. This example illustrates the ways in which embodied femininity is read in terms of sexuality and thus becomes the subject of focus, rather than the sexual harassment and threatening behaviour of the young male. Naomi's sexualised femininity,

expressed through her physical appearance, body styles and gestures is interpreted by adults as worrying and potentially dangerous. Naomi's mother appears to wish to repress and deny the sexual in the strict prohibition of boyfriends and her disapproval of domestic disruption. Mrs Evans' preoccupation with Naomi's appearance rather than Nathan's actions echoes elements of the 'she-asked-for-it' argument, popularly employed in commonsense discourses to account for incidents of rape and sexual assault. The suggestion here is that Naomi's demeanour displays sexuality in ways that provoke the male sex drive into action. Both adults indicate an awareness of the dangers ascribed to female sexuality, particularly the power of sexuality to disrupt the rational educative process. From their perspective Naomi is 'playing with fire', promoting her sexuality at the risk of damaging her reputation and her chances of academic success. It is interesting to note that Naomi's behaviour incurs incrimination from all of the different social spheres she has contact with: Nathan's harassment, her peer group's regulatory exclamations, her mother's concern and her teacher's disapproval. The collective censorship of Naomi in this instance illustrates the many ways in which female sexuality can be seen as culpable and punishable. My fieldnotes, written-up after the discussion with Mrs Evans underline the gendered interpretation of the incident in which femininity is seen to bespeak sexuality,

I'm sure that Catrina (Mrs Evans) does feel that Nathan's behaviour is a form of harassment but finds it strange in, retrospect, that she made hardly any comment on his behaviour and focused almost entirely on Naomi (fieldnotes 25.3.96).

Concluding comments

This chapter has focused upon the school as a site for the production of

discourses in relation to sexuality. While the school can be seen as one site, the proliferation of discourses can be seen to occur in different spaces *within* the school. The chapter argues that heterosexuality remains the dominant sexual category invoked and produced by school-based practices. Versions of heterosexuality can be seen to be produced within the school through the different discursive practices in three areas of school life: the official curriculum, pedagogic practice and pupil cultures. At the level of the official curriculum heterosexuality is inscribed in school policy documents as a religious and moral ideal; the preferred form of sexual activity anchored in 'family values' and heterosexual coupledness. This view of legitimate sexuality is mediated by pedagogic practice. In sex education lessons at Clarke School, young women become the focus for sexual learning which emphasises their reproductive capacities and their ability to exercise 'choice'. The final section of the chapter explores the ways in which issues of sexuality feature in pupil cultures. My observations support the findings of other researchers which suggest that there is a disjuncture between the teaching of sex education and the 'lived' experience of sexuality among pupils in school (Holland et al 1991; Wolpe 1988). Finally, the chapter suggests that the domain of the sexual is inextricably bound up with, and reflective of, the asymmetrical power relations inscribed in a sex-gender order where female sexuality can be viewed as dangerous and disruptive.

Different discourses in relation to issues of sexuality can be drawn upon in different spaces within the school and become naturalised in the everyday practices and routines of the school. These discourses may not always be connected but exist in relation to one another and collectively produce versions of sex and gender. An analysis of the different discursive practices in the school indicates that heterosexuality is not singular but plural, invoked in many different forms: at the level of the institution through

policy documents; at the level of pedagogic practice; and in the realm of lived social relations in informal spaces within the school. The following chapters look, in more detail, at the informal sphere of pupil cultures and issues of sexuality. *Agony Aunts and Absences* is based upon a closely-worked analysis of one sex education lesson. The aim of the chapter is to explore the connections and fissures between the practice of sex education and the interests and anxieties of the student body.

CHAPTER 4

Agony Aunts and Absences: an analysis of a sex education class

Introduction

In this chapter I will built upon the picture introduced in chapter 3 which discussed pupil cultures and the teaching strategies employed by Mrs Evans. The focus for this chapter is upon the proceedings of one sex education lesson for Year 10 pupils (age 14-15) at Clarke School. The lesson, in which pupils were asked to write and discuss fictional problems, formed part of a ten-week course on sex education. This lesson constitutes session eight of the course. The course is taught to all Year 10 pupils in the school and forms part of a broader PSE programme which is planned and taught over four years. By developing an analysis of one lesson I aim to illustrate some of the complexities involved in the teaching and learning of sex education. The analysis indicates that sex education offers a space where competing discourses meet and are played out within the classroom arena. The chapter suggests that young women, in particular, draw upon popular culture as a resource to articulate aspects of sexuality while young men feel less comfortable with such discussions. Finally, the chapter indicates that the use of popular cultural forms such as agony aunts provide students with the opportunity to discuss several themes which are generally underdeveloped within sex education programmes such as: sexual abuse; pleasure and danger in sexual relations; constancy and betrayal; homosexuality.

The difficulties of sex education as a practice have been documented by many researchers (Johnson 1996; Lees 1993; Redman 1994; Sears 1992; Thomson 1994; Trudell 1993; Wolpe 1988). Within this body of work the competing demands of politicians, parents, public health policy makers and

students can be seen to create the conditions whereby the pedagogic practice of sex education is marked by a series of constraints and adversity, often under the gaze of a critical and scandal-hungry tabloid press (see Epstein & Johnson 1998). It is anticipated that this analysis of sex education at Clarke School will contribute to our understanding of sex education by exploring factors which make it a difficult, if not, 'impossible practice' (Johnson 1996: 163).

The Lesson

The teacher responsible for the ten-week PSE course was Mrs Evans. As noted in the previous chapter, Mrs Evans was a practising Christian and a senior teacher at Clarke School. She had a good relationship with most students in the school, many of whom saw her as someone to confide in and share problems with. In this respect Mrs Evans can be seen as the school's unofficial agony aunt, where counselling becomes part of her recognised and informally sanctioned role as PSE coordinator. In many cases Mrs Evans was familiar with the home backgrounds of students and had built up relationships with parents and siblings.

In this sex education lesson, which was concerned with discussing problems in relation to issues of sexuality, Year 10 students were asked by the teacher to write a fictional 'problem' to a fictional agony aunt. Mrs Evans described the class to me as 'able, good at discussion and supportive of each other'. The class activity involved students volunteering to read their 'problems' to the class. This was followed by a discussion of the 'problem' with the class, facilitated by Mrs Evans. Sessions prior to the 'agony aunt' activity included the viewing of videos on marriage and relationships in the 1950s and 60s and a lesson on contraceptive methods given by the school nurse. In the sex education lesson of the previous week, students watched a video entitled

Agony Aunts where two adults (one male, one female) offered advice to young people using three examples: asking someone out; deciding to have sex; and relationship breakdown. After viewing the video students were asked to write their own 'problem' to an agony aunt. Mrs Evans suggested to the class that they could perhaps draw upon the themes of the PSE course.

The agony aunt activity was enjoyed by members of the class. My field notes, written up after the lesson, contain the following observations:

All problems aroused great interest from the class who seemed to be more animated than in other lessons. 'Agony aunt' seemed to be a popular format for voicing issues - vicarious pleasure of discussing other's problems, curiosity, or a way of making safe one's own fears and anxieties? (Field notes 11.3.96)

Like the problem pages of teenage magazines, the agony aunt format can be seen as a facility for discussion of sensitive and controversial issues. Otherwise unspoken topics can be written, read and discussed within this approach to sex education. This clearly has an appeal for young people where 'daring' to speak about certain issues can be legitimated within the scope of a classroom task.

Everything was perfect but ...

Mrs Evans began the session by asking for students to offer their 'problems' for discussion. The first 'problem' was written and read by Vicky:

Vicky: (reading) I have a very serious problem. I have recently slept with my boyfriend and everything was perfect. I thought

he really loved me but one week later I found out that he has got a long string of one night stands. He has slept with them all without contraception. He even admitted it to me and said it was all in the past and I believed him. What if he is still doing it? I have also missed my last period by one week and I do not know what to do. If my boyfriend has contracted HIV by having unprotected sex I will have it because we did not use any form of contraception and if I have it so will my child.

From a desperate E17 fan.

This letter combines the themes of romantic love, pregnancy and HIV and presents them as one problem. The articulation of such a 'problem' may indicate some of the ways in which young women experience and relate to issues of sexuality. As a letter to an agony aunt it is similar in style and tone to letters found in the problem pages of contemporary teenage magazines such as *More!* and *Sugar*. Teenage magazines and their readership are explored in more detail as the object of focus for the following chapter.

Vicky's letter uses short sentences to present a linear narrative sequence in stark terms which can be seen as an attempt to emulate the language of popular cultural forms. All superfluous details are stripped away to present the 'core' of the 'problem' as a 'desperate' dilemma based on personal pain which combines knowledge and inexperience. The knowledge of menstrual cycles, pregnancy and the ways in which HIV is contracted contrasts sharply with the naivete of Vicky's emotional investments in the rituals and symbolic representations of romantic love. In the letter romantic ideals are expressed in many ways: sex for the first time in the relationship is presented as the 'perfect' sexual union; the search for constancy follows, 'he has a long string of one night stands ... [he] said it was all in the past and I believed him' and finally there is the fear of betrayal, 'what if he is still doing

it?' Vicky's letter can be read in terms of her ability, as a good student, to take on a role through the deployment of a sophisticated literary competence in the emulation of a popular cultural form. However, Vicky's letter can also be interpreted psychoanalytically as a projection of her concerns regarding sexual relationships where emotional anxieties are interwoven with practical details of sexual health and reproduction. My use of the term 'projection' draws upon the recognition within Freudian theory of the process whereby individuals refuse unpleasant accusations of the self by projecting them onto others. Whilst, as far as we know, Vicky is not directly experiencing the problems of the young woman in the letter, the agony aunt activity allows her the opportunity for imaginative identification within the domain of the sexual which may imply unconscious investments. Under the guise of writing to a problem page, Vicky can risk the articulation of personal pain and prohibited subjects within a context where social recognition can be conferred on individuals who produce interesting 'problems' for the class to discuss. Furthermore, the reading and discussing of problems can be seen as a pleasurable act, arousing interest and excitement in a similar way to the consumption of problem pages in teenage magazines (see Chapter 5).

The class discussion of Vicky's letter was concerned with offering advice and support in relation to the issues of sexual health presented by the writer:

Mrs Evans: How would we help? What are the issues? What's the advice? How would you start off? This person is desperate ...

Boy 1: Get a pregnancy test and a HIV test

Mrs Evans: Well hang on, that's essential, but how are you

going to start off? What do you think you might say before you even say that?

Girl 1: Calm down.

Mrs Evans: Calm down. Yes, anybody done any first aid training? The first thing you're supposed to do is keep reassuring the victim, the person that's hurt isn't it? You reassure them, 'It's OK, it's going to be alright, calm down' ... Any other advice?

Girl 2: HIV test and contact your GP

Girl 3: Brook Centre

Girl 4: I think they (staff at the Brook) should speak to the boyfriend as well so that he's not putting it on someone else.

Mrs Evans: Yes, any other advice? Have we covered the main issues of advice and support?

Emma: What about contraceptives for the future?

Mrs Evans: What about some advice for the future? Yes, do you think it would be a good place to include some advice for the future? 'I'm sorry to hear you didn't make clear, this is something you need to talk over with your boyfriend in the future. Perhaps you could look around for advice centres in your area.'

In this discussion the help and advice offered to the writer is couched in terms of a medical discourse where the physical body can be seen to manifest symptoms of ill health which can be 'reassured' and recuperated. The collective recommendation of a pregnancy test, HIV test, consultation with health agencies and contraceptives for the future, present the young woman with a sexual health package as a panacea for the 'problem'. Although a fictional account, this replicates the conventions of actual problem pages. Discussing the problem within the terrain of a medical discourse overlooks the lived experience of sexuality as presented by the writer. Vicky's letter articulates a 'problem' arising from her sexual relationship where sexual health knowledge is intermeshed with emotional uncertainty. The expressions of anxiety and entreaties in relation to emotional investments in the ideology and practice of heterosexual romance are not addressed by the discussion which is framed by imperatives to act in the interests of an individualised, and non-gendered, sexual healthcare programme. The presence of some themes concerning knowledge of sexual health and the absences of other themes concerning emotional experience suggest that the practice of sex education, in this case, can be located within a medical discourse which is familiar to teacher and students. The ways in which knowledge of sexual health interacts with emotional experience in the lives of young women is seemingly more difficult to discuss within the context of the sex education class.

Late period: girls' and reputation

The following 'problem' discussed in the sex education class is written and read by Sophie:

Sophie: (reading) Dear Agony Aunt, I'm 19 years old and I

made a stupid mistake. I went out with my mates one night to a local night club. I got drunk quite easily and I had unprotected sex with a boy I hardly know. Now I'm worried sick. My period is six days late and the boy has been going round telling everyone that I'm easy. I now have a bad reputation and everybody is lecturing me. Help. How quickly can I have a pregnancy test to tell if you are pregnant or not and is it always accurate?

In this letter Sophie outlines a concern over 'reputation' as a salient feature of social experience in the lives of young women. Her letter indicates that young women must be ever vigilant in the protection of their reputation as a momentary lapse in responsibility may be regarded as regrettable and damaging or, as Sophie puts it, 'a stupid mistake'. Sophie's 'problem' makes a direct link between reputation and sexual behaviour; having sex with someone you 'hardly know' inevitably leads to a 'bad reputation' and social admonishment from female friends, 'everybody is lecturing me'. In this situation it is young males who are invested with the power to define the sexual reputation of young women as 'easy'. Sophie's letter finds points of resonance with researchers in this field where the experience of sexism, misogynistic labelling and a concern with female sexual reputations can be seen as key markers in the construction of young women's identities (McRobbie & Garber 1982; Griffin 1982; Lees 1986, 1993; Canaan 1986; Cowie & Lees 1987). In this body of literature the presence of the 'slag/drag' dichotomy used by males in the sexual appraisal of women, has the ideological effect of transforming unequal gender relations into sexual differences which can be treated as 'natural' and inherently given. In the class discussion which followed Sophie's letter the gendered dynamics of the situation are articulated in a particular way:

Mrs Evans: Well, she's asked a lot of questions. It must be a difficult one because you've got the problem and you've got the direct questions as well. How are you going to start this one off? It's quite tiring being an agony aunt I think. How are we going to write back? OK, some advice for this letter then? I guess that the name-calling part and the reputation is bothering her. That seemed to come across quite strongly.

Girl 1: Well it wasn't her fault because she was taken advantage of. That's what she's got to say now, 'It's not my fault, it's something that's happened' and she's got to tell her friends about what happened.

Mrs Evans: This one of reputation, how other people think of you, what other people say about you is - we usually care quite a lot how we come across and how people view us and it's very special and unique to you and it's usually quite precious and if someone dents or damages your reputation it causes quite a lot of hurt. I think they need reassuring. Go on, what else?

Girl 2: She should talk to the boy, I mean he's -

Blake: He won't wanna know though.

Mrs Evans: He won't wanna know. You're absolutely right Blake, he is not gonna want to know is he? He's either not gonna want to know, say he was drunk, he's not going to remember.

In this discussion the notion of 'reputation' is seen as 'special', 'unique' and 'precious' to the individual. The words used by Mrs Evans to convey the importance of 'reputation' suggest that it can be viewed as part of an 'inner self' concerned with self-worth and good standing. This conceptualisation is not extended to the ways in which 'reputation' may be gender differentiated and mediated through social interaction. The discussion, then, explores the 'problem' within the parameters of dominant gender/sex categories where predatory males are able to abdicate responsibility for sexual activity ('he won't wanna know'), while vulnerable females must take responsibility for themselves and their reputation. Alcohol plays a significant part in the remembering and forgetting of the sexual activity which, again, is viewed in gender specific terms. For the young women being drunk creates the context for a temporary loss of control which she is constantly reminded of in the fixing of her 'bad reputation' and fear of pregnancy. For the young man, however, being drunk allows for a moment of forgetting where the memory can simply be erased and disavowed.

A boy and his friend: the homosocial or the homoerotic heterosexual?

The next agony aunt letter to be discussed by the Year 10 class was written and read by Neil:

Neil: (reading) I've been with my best friend for many years and we do a lot of things together. I also have a girlfriend that I've been going out with and she wants me to spend more time with her than with my friend, I want to spend time with my friend and not lose my girlfriend. What should I do?

Neil's letter provides a point of contrast with the previous letter written and

read by Vicky. Neil offers the class a 'problem' for discussion but does not display any of the personal pain and self revelation of Vicky's letter. The 'problem' as expressed in Neil's letter is one of divided loyalties, how to split his time between his friend and his girlfriend and maintain his relationship with both parties. While male friendship can be seen as a key site of emotions, it is seldom commented on explicitly outside of 'Buddy' movies. Neil's letter works within conventional assumptions of gendered relations where males and females are located within separate and mutually exclusive social spheres, where notions of independence and dependence are played out in particular ways. From this perspective women can be regarded as possessive of their partners' time and may attempt to monitor the relationship in this respect, 'she wants me to spend more time with her than with my friend'. The pervasive assumptions relating to males, on the other hand, concern their investments in the exclusivity of male peer group friendships and resistance to any perceived attempt to encroach on this space. The gendered dynamics of this situation, within the context of heterosexual relationships, place males as guardians of their independence and females as pursuers of their own dependence.

Whereas Vicky's letter utilises the language and themes of popular culture, particularly the problem pages of teenage magazines, Neil's letter does not demonstrate such a sophisticated familiarity with these popular cultural forms. It is possible that these forms are coded as feminine (see Chapter 5) and, therefore, inappropriate for Neil to deploy them even if he knows them. Neil's letter does not 'risk' any projection of the 'problem' into areas of fantasy and sexual interest such as: in what way is the relationship with his girlfriend sexual; in what ways does sex present additional responsibilities/problems; is his desire to spend time with his friend homoerotic or 'natural'? Neil's 'problem' as articulated in the letter is a

brief, starkly presented 'fact' of heterosexual romance ('I want to spend time with my friend and not lose my girlfriend. What should I do?') which makes no attempt at dramatic presentation or elaboration. The contrast between Vicky's letter and Neil's letter suggests that gender differences are further played out within the context of the classroom where the discourse of popular culture can be used by young women to articulate sexual issues and areas of interest and curiosity. Neil's letter, however, suggests that young men do not utilise this discourse in the same way and appear reluctant to use the exercise as a space for the projection of fantasies and anxieties.

In the brief discussion of Neil's letter, Mrs Evans and members of the class suggested that it was important to make time for his friend and his girlfriend and in some situations it may be possible to bring them together.

The Flasher: the gaze and its object

Laura: (reading) I don't know what to do. It happened a few weeks ago. I'm worried it might ruin my relationship. I went with my little sister and my Mum to the High Street to do some shopping. When we got there I decided to stay in the car.

Mum told me to lock all the doors. As she left the car I locked all the doors and turned on the radio. I found a magazine and sat and read it. I was engrossed in reading my magazine and noticed out of the corner of my eye a man standing there. He was in his late 30s and smartly dressed in a coat and raincoat.

The way he looked at me I assumed he was waiting for someone so I carried on reading. After a minute or two I heard a noise. I looked up and he was standing right in front of me.

Transfixed by the weird look in his eyes, it was a few seconds

before I realised he was doing something to the fly of his trousers. Suddenly I lowered my eyes and to my horror the man [smothered laugh] was masturbating. Staying there as I was I wanted someone to hide me. I thought that if this pervert couldn't see me he might go away. I lowered myself into the front of the passenger seat and waited for my Mum to come back. Lying there in that small place, panic set in. What if he banged the car door? What if he smashed the windows? Every footstep outside was amplified. I jumped when I heard the key in the car door but to my relief it was Mum.

'What are you doing down there love?'

'Er, um, I'm just sleeping' I lied.

When we got home I went straight to bed but every time I closed my eyes I could see that man with the beady stare and I was helpless to stop the panic rising to my stomach all over again. It's two weeks later and I still haven't spoken to anyone. I haven't told my boyfriend and I'm sure he must know that something's up. I'm afraid that if I tell him he'll leave me and I won't be able to cope with that as well as that man. Please help. A dedicated fan.

Laura's letter presents a case of indecent exposure that is rich in its detailing of the incident and the sensibilities of the experience. The narrative is carefully structured, setting up the context whereby such an event could occur, 'I decided to stay in the car'; recalling the experience, 'to my horror the man was masturbating' and drawing upon cultural signifiers to document pertinent details and feelings. The description of the man uses visual imagery such as the 'raincoat' and 'the beady stare' to portray a stereotypical picture of the flasher as an older man ('pervert') who lurks

around in public places. The narrative closure creates a powerful well of post-traumatic emotions expressed in terms of having to live and relive the experience, 'the panic rising to my stomach all over again' and a subsequent inability to speak to anyone about the event.

The presentation of this 'problem' as a powerful and dramatic scene of exposure and vulnerability draws upon the language and style of popular cultural forms, particularly the problem pages of teen magazines. The use of teen magazines within the presentation of the 'problem' can be seen to work at different levels. At the level of cultural representation, the narrative structure of Laura's letter emulates the problem page format in direct and specific ways. Within this context a dilemma is presented and recounted as a linear sequence of cause and effect. A damaged and dysfunctional persona presents a crisis and makes an impassioned plea for help which can be seen as a desire for validation of self through the experience. The response from the agony aunt provides a moment of recognition and affirmation which operates regardless of the content of the advice offered, and represents an attempted 'solution' to the crisis by suggesting an explanation and/or action. The process of writing to an agony aunt and gaining a response can be seen as a therapeutic relationship in itself where both parties are engaged in an act of 'speaking out'. At another level the magazine is also present within the experience itself as the recreational activity engaged in while alone in the car, 'I found a magazine and sat and read it. I was engrossed in reading my magazine when I noticed out of the corner of my eye a man standing'. The appearance of the man at this point may not be entirely accidental. In a groupwork discussion with girls from this class, many of the girls I spoke with referred to *Sugar* magazine as a particular favourite of their peer group. The girls suggested to me that *Sugar* gained this place in their affection as it contained 'interesting stories such as *I was terrorised by a*

flasher'. The discussion of this story, which may have been read by Laura, and the availability of a social space for the projection of fantasies and anxieties may have created the conditions whereby an enactment of the story can be staged. Within the context of the classroom this enactment is both safe and risky; the area of safety lies in the exercise which allows experiences to be created without them really happening and, risky, in the sense that issues such as masturbation, indecent exposure and sexual threat are rarely formally discussed in the classroom.

Viewing the 'problem' psychoanalytically as a projection of Laura's fantasies and anxieties gives us an insight into some of her concerns in relation to issues of sexuality. As the author of the 'problem', Laura brings into being both the flasher and herself as the victim of an act of indecent exposure. Within this scenario Laura's imaginative identification with the victim is also in relation to the male exhibitionist or 'pervert' as she terms him. Freud's (1977) discussion of sexual perversions regard the perversions of scopophilia and exhibitionism as psychical opposites which may be embodied within an individual:

Every active perversion is thus accompanied by its passive counterpart: anyone who is an exhibitionist in his unconscious is also at the same time a voyeur (Freud 1977: 81).

The demonstration of this relationship within Laura's letter positions her as both exhibitionist and voyeur in Freudian theory where such perversions are conceptualised as fixations of preliminary sexual aims. The associative link between scopophilia and exhibitionism can be seen in the act of looking where the eye corresponds to an erotogenic zone, a site of pleasure and desire 'subordinate to the genitals and as substitute(s) for them' (Freud 1977:

84). Acts of *looking* and being *looked at* permeate Laura's letter: 'the way he looked at me' in the initial encounter; witnessing the man masturbating, 'I looked up and there he was... transfixed by the weird look in his eyes'; and finally the distress of constantly reliving the experience, 'everytime I closed my eyes I could see the man with the beady stare'. In Laura's articulation of this experience the pleasure of looking is intimately related to the danger of being looked at in which the threat of violence and further sexual violation is present (Kelly 1988). In the Freudian framework the activity engaged in by exhibitionists involves 'exhibiting their own genitals in order to obtain a reciprocal view of the genitals of the other person' (Freud 1977: 70). In this reading, the exposure of the genitals *becomes* the act of intercourse where sexual pleasure is located in the gaze. In the context of Laura's letter the pleasure and danger involved in looking and being looked at exist in a closely bound relationship which bespeaks both a desire for sexual experience and a fear of it. The sight of the man masturbating is immediately followed by the response, 'Staying there as I was [in the car] I wanted something to hide me'. The appeal for 'something to hide me' can be interpreted in different ways as an attempt to escape the sexual threat and also a desire to experience sex without being seen to experience it. The concealment involved in these expressions of desire is indicative of the absences within sex education classes, particularly the missing discourse of desire identified by Fine (1988) which operates to police the boundaries of the speakable and the unspeakable in relation to female sexuality. Laura's 'problem' further suggests that the absence of desire in such contexts may also be related to the internal repressions of sexuality where sexual activity can become a site of struggle between desire and revulsion.

Psychoanalytic insights drawing upon frameworks other than the Freudian suggest further ways of reading Laura's letter in terms of pleasure/danger

posed by the sexual. Using Lacanian theory it is possible to suggest that there is some playing around with the 'I'/'not I' identifications of the Symbolic, the world of language and the social which pre-exists the Subject (see below for a further discussion of the Lacanian Symbolic). Although Laura is not obviously powerful in the story, she does create the 'I' and the 'eye' of the exhibitionist and imagines the power of his position. It is possible to see the car itself in sexual terms as a *receptacle* for her and her experience and, hence, a maternal body. In the Lacanian sense the primary loss or 'lack' is that of the maternal body, so it is from an imagined maternal body that Laura makes her different identifications in the play of 'I'/'not I' positions. According to Lacan (1977), the speaking subject comes into being because of the repression of desire for the lost mother. Laura's description of slipping further down into the passenger seat, lying in that 'small space' could indicate that she has assumed a foetal position in the womb-like body of the car. The remark, wanting 'someone to hide me' seems particularly significant and carries suggestions of passivity in sexual relations. In Laura's 'letter' it is possible to read the narrative as an expression of the tensions between the little girl's desire to escape back into the body of the mother (car), to be little again and the young woman's fascination to experience grown-up sexuality.

The class discussion of Laura's letter led by Mrs Evans, collectively resists an acknowledgement of the links between pleasure and danger within the domain of the sexual. Here, the focus is upon the difficulties faced by the victim and the need for her to talk to someone:

Mrs Evans: A very powerful letter. First of all excellent, you've really got within the task, a very powerful letter. But what on earth are we going to do for this person? Any advice?

Girl 1: Tell someone [unclear]

Mrs Evans: I think this person has bottled up this very real anxiety for a long time. I think it needs to be shared. So we're agreed. But how and whom?

Girl 2: If it's too difficult to talk to friends, her family and boyfriend, perhaps she could talk to a counsellor?

Mrs Evans: Yes, sometimes, yes, perhaps not the people that are so close to you, somebody more, a little bit more distant, that sounds like very good advice. Anything else that she could do?

Girl 3: She's got to be persuaded to talk to someone because of all the other people out there.

Mrs Evans: Yes.

Here, the discussion turns to the practical ways in which sexual experiences and events can be spoken of as problematic, anxiety provoking and in need of professional expertise and intervention in the form of counselling. The discursive construction of sex as threatening and a source of problems is a salient feature of this discussion and many others during the course of the lesson. This discourse allows for dangers to be revealed and spoken while issues of pleasure and desire are concealed and unspoken. The pleasure of discussing sexual events such as the one presented by Laura is similarly hidden, though it is clearly present in the willingness of the girls to discuss

the 'problem' and Laura's stifled laughter as she reads the words, 'to my horror he was masturbating'.

'I feel so dirty ...': discussing sexual abuse

Clare: (reading) Dear Agony Aunt, I haven't spoken to anyone since this happened but I just need to tell someone. Last week my mum's boyfriend raped me. I was so scared I had no-one to talk to and I felt if I told my Mum she wouldn't believe me. I can't face my mum's boyfriend when he comes round. But to make matters worse I think I might be pregnant. I haven't been to school because I think everyone can tell what's happened. I feel so dirty and I spend hours in the bath trying to scrub away the bad memories. Please help, a dedicated Vanilla Ice fan.

In this letter of pain, hurt and violation Clare writes to an agony aunt to share the secret of sexual abuse within the family, a secret which, until now, she has not been able to tell anyone. The fear of speaking about sexual abuse in the family is a theme echoed by survivors of rape and incest in feminist literature in this field (see, for example, Gordon 1988; Kelly: 1988). In Clare's letter this fear is articulated in terms of isolation, 'I had no-one to talk to' and a concern that her mother would not believe her. The pressure to keep child sexual abuse and incest hidden from view is indicative of the cultural taboo surrounding these issues which makes 'breaking the silence' a difficult and oppositional strategy. This taboo co-exists with a public discourse in relation to sexuality which seeks to naturalise the heterosexual nuclear family as an 'ideal' for the organisation of gender relations and parenting practices³. Clare's letter describes the distress and lasting shock of sexual

³ For a further discussion of these issues see Johnson (1996).

abuse in the family in terms of feeling 'dirty', despoiled and in need of self-purgation which is both physical and psychological, 'I spend hours in the bath trying to scrub away the bad memories'. The 'bad memories' and feelings of uncleanness expressed in the letter suggests that the subject position adopted by the author is one of 'victim' where fear of male sexual violation and blame for it is internalised by the woman who experiences it. This theme is a feature of feminist analyses from different perspectives which see rape and sexual violence as a 'symbolic expression of male power' (Segal 1990: 232). Deborah Cameron and Elizabeth Frazer (1996) comment on the ways in which notions of male sexuality and female responsibility structure contemporary gender relations:

a powerful incentive exists for us to police our own behaviour and acquiesce in the idea that men's sexuality is 'naturally' predatory, only to be contained by female circumspection (Cameron & Frazer 1990: 208).

From this perspective the problem is *men*; masculine sexuality becomes emblematic of male power and is expressed through the motifs of '*performance, penetration, conquest*' (ibid: 211, italics as original).

The responses from members of the class which followed the reading of Clare's letter illustrate some of the strengths and limitations of sex education programmes where issues of rape and child sexual abuse are discussed in ways which incorporate some aspects of feminist analysis while excluding other aspects:

Voices: [in low tones] Oooh, wooh, woo-oooh.

Mrs Evans: Well Blake, what do you make of that?

Blake: I reckon she should move house.

[all laugh]

Mrs Evans: As you would expect from Blake, a good piece of practical advice there. Go on Blake.

Blake: She should tell someone ... yeah she should, because -

Mrs Evans: That's great. Thanks for starting us off. What other advice do we have?

Girl 1: Tell the police

Girl 2: Ring Childline

Mrs Evans: What do you think about some of the things the person's included in her letter? Can you just go back over the bit about, Vicky, have you got the letter there still? Can you read the bit about unclean?

Vicky: (reading) I feel so dirty I spend hours in the bath scrubbing away the bad memories.

Mrs Evans: Yes, who'd like to make any comment on what the writer has said?

Girl 3: She thinks it's her fault.

Girl 2: Yeah, she probably thinks it's her fault.

Mrs Evans: Feels that it's her fault, feels guilty, dirty, literally dirty. The other thing was she says she hasn't been going to school because she feels the others can tell what's happened.

Girl 4: She knows it's there and she feels she can project it to everyone else around as if it's a mark on her body.

Mrs Evans: Absolutely... Again it's a very perceptive letter, you've written them with a lot of thought, with what actually people do feel... What other advice would you give this person?

Girl 5: Talk to a counsellor.

Boy 1: Go back to school.

Mrs Evans: Go back to school, yes, try to get your life back into as normal - and then what about once you're there?

Girl 3: Speak to your friends or somebody at school.

Girl 6: Find out whether you're pregnant or not.

Mrs Evans: Yes, that's another issue she raised, pregnancy issue. So you're not just giving one piece of advice, you're

giving several leads aren't you?

In this discussion of Clare's letter the engagement with the issues demonstrates a high level of awareness, sensitivity and empathy for the individual who has been sexually abused. The 'ooh' sounds from members of the class which immediately follow the reading of the letter suggests that there is a recognition of rape as a transgressive act the letter dares to name. The discussion focuses on the emotional distress of the writer's predicament and what she can do about it. The feelings of blame, guilt and responsibility articulated in feminist literature on rape and sexual abuse clearly find points of resonance in the discussion in the reiteration of the comment, 'She thinks it's her fault'. In this respect the experience of rape comes to be understood by the class as 'a mark on her body' which is both real and symbolic. The assimilation of this aspect of feminist analysis in the class discussion works within a feminist discourse which aims to discredit the myth that women are, in some way, to blame for (male) acts of sexual violation. In other respects, however, the class discussion omits important features of a feminist perspective such as a consideration of gender difference, power relations and heterosexuality. Within a feminist framework there is an acknowledgement that women and children occupy positions of powerlessness in nuclear families. This lack of power in the family and the social construction of masculinity in terms of a demanding and forceful sexuality⁴ create the conditions whereby sexual abuse involving heterosexual men and young girls in the family accounts for the majority of cases of child sexual abuse (see Segal 1990: 160). In the class discussion of Clare's letter, the familial context of the rape (occurring at home with her mother's boyfriend) is not mentioned and the term *sexual abuse* is not named.

⁴ See Hollway (1989) for a discussion of discourses of male sexuality, especially the 'male sex-drive'.

These absences serve to perpetuate some features of the pre-feminist story of rape where sexual abuse can be viewed as the rare and aberrant behaviour of some individuals. In the class discussion there is an assimilation of feminist perspectives in relation to females as victims of male sexual violation while broader social issues of gender and power are not embraced. This partial and selective appropriation of aspects of dominant ways of looking at sexual abuse combined with some feminist themes suggests that the school, as a site for the production of sexuality, is active in creating sexual stories of its own.

Ken Plummer (1995) offers an analysis of the ways in which the sexual stories that can be told are dependent upon a social context where they can be heard. Plummer documents the emergence of narratives telling of women's experiences of rape from the 1970s. These new stories of rape challenged the old story of male entitlement and privilege by placing women's experiences of fear, subordination and violation at the centre of the new narrative structure. This shift in emphasis in the telling of the rape story found a community of listeners and supporters in the collective activities of the second-wave women's movement. Plummer's analysis considers the ways in which the old story marks out the terrain for the new story, where the emergent narrative frequently becomes an inversion of the older form. Plummer outlines three strategies in the emergence of new narrative forms: the debunking of myths; the creation of a history and the writing of a political plot (1995: 67). The class discussion of Vicky's letter indicates that her narrative is read within the context of challenging some myths concerning rape but does not move to a consideration of the other two strategies. There is no suggestion that Vicky's experience could be a common one which may enable women to create a sense of history based on shared recognition of the links between personal experience and social

structures. Neither is there an acknowledgement that collective experience can form the basis for the development of a political agenda or transformative practice. The ways in which Vicky's story is told and heard by the class suggests that the school story in relation to rape and child sexual abuse is an individualised one, calling for specific and singular action such as, 'tell the police', 'call Childline', 'talk to a counsellor' and 'go back to school'. The individualisation of sexual issues can be seen to work with dominant assumptions of gender categories and relations of power which take on a 'fixed' quality in the story-telling community. In this respect the school story echoes the treatment of sexual themes in popular cultural forms such as soaps and chat shows where story 'overload' provides a context for the depoliticisation of narratives (Plummer 1995: 78). In the generation of new narratives, 'authors' do not necessarily have any purchase on the ways in which stories are disseminated and used.

Scared to be gay: homophobia and the power of girls

The following 'problem' to be discussed by the class is written and read by Sara.

Sara: (reading) I'm a fifteen year old boy with a really serious problem. I've recently split up with my girlfriend and at the same time I realise I'm attracted to my best friend Simon. I don't want to be gay. I'm really scared of being gay and I don't think I am. Please help.

Voices: [with disgust] Urghh

Uuurrghhh

Yuk

[laughter and cries of derision]

[temporary breakdown in social order of the classroom with everyone talking and laughing at once]

Helen: Ask some more boys Miss!

[more laughter]

Mrs Evans: [*struggling to make herself heard above noise of the class*] That's clearly the sort of thing. All the letters have been written - the ground rules of this are - we ask everyone to join in with the task, yes. Don't be identifying with the letters. We've only actually had, so far, one boy's letter but here's somebody writing what is a very typical boy's problem.

Boys: [chorsing] Is it? Is it?

[laughter]

Mrs Evans: Isn't it?

Boys: [talking and shouting at once] No it isn't.

Not likely!

Not with me it's not.

Nor me.

Sara's articulation of the boy's 'problem' and the ensuing responses of the

class illustrate some of the difficulties involved in discussing issues of homosexuality in school. Sara's letter expresses an explicit and impassioned fear and denial of homosexuality, 'I don't want to be gay. I'm scared of being gay and I don't think I am'. The breakdown in social order that follows Sara's disclosure suggests that this fear is shared by members of the class where to voice same sex attraction becomes an act of severe disruption. Mrs Evans' attempt to restore classroom order recognises the anxiety involved in young people discussing homosexuality and tries to allay the panic by inviting students to participate in a rational discussion where ground-rules are adhered to. Her endeavour to 'normalise' homosexuality through discussion meets with further disruption and group denial by many of the boys in the class. In this context the 'really serious problem' can be seen as a dread of being gay which encourages young men to engage in homophobic performances (Nayak & Kehily 1996). The disruption and disavowal involved in the young men's responses to Sara's letter and Mrs Evans' attempt at discussion suggests that young men in school are concerned to display a masculine identity that is directly linked to a heterosexual identity. The pervasive presence of homophobias in school point to the instability of gender categories where masculinity is repeatedly struggled over within male peer groups. Homophobic performance can be seen as an attempt to display a coherent masculinity through the dramatic enactment of heterosexual desire which disclaims and derides any relationship to homosexuality. At the level of the individual, homophobic performance expels homoerotic desire from the Self onto Others in a public display which serves as a 'self-convincing ritual' in the denial of homosexual desire through the conspicuous demonstration of a heterosexual masculine ideal. The repetition of homophobic performances in school indicates that heterosexual masculine identities are sustained through fraught exhibition, where the enactment itself can be seen as evidence of the insecurities and

splittings within the male psyche.

It is interesting to note the position of young women in this exchange. It is, of course, Sara who initiates the subject of homosexuality in the letter which she writes from the subject position of a fifteen year old boy. She does not speak of lesbianism or imaginatively identify as a young women who is sexually attracted to a female friend. Sara's letter, followed by the comment from another girl urging Mrs Evans to, 'Ask some more boys Miss!' suggests that young women are aware of the power of homosexuality to tap into points of vulnerability in the enactment of masculine heterosexual identities. The discussion proceeds in the following way:

Sara: First of all you should calm him down and say a lot of people go through this.

Girls: [chorusing] Yeah, all the boys.
Yeah, the boys.

Sara: Not me though.

Mrs Evans: [directing her comments to two tables of predominantly boys] I think we must press back over here for some extra opinion there. Perhaps I, I, yes I did deliberately say that to see what reaction there would be when I said that's a very typical problem and you said, very strongly, 'No, no it isn't'. Go on, take us from there - you don't think it's a very common situation?

Boy: Not at this age anyway.

Mrs Evans: Not at this age. What, d'you mean you've been there already and been through it?

[laughter and momentary disruption]

Girls: [chorusing] They're embarrassed - the embarrassment!

Look, look!

Next question Miss!

The development of the discussion in this way illustrates the polarisation of gender categories which occurs in relation to issues of homosexuality. In this exchange males and females take up positions in opposing and closely bounded categories which do not allow for moments of alliance or ambivalence. The identity work involved in discussing homosexuality in school indicates that young men engage in defensive strategies to preserve the fiction of heterosexual coherence while young women clearly enjoy a collective identity premised upon the exposure and subsequent humiliation of young males. This opens up the question of where young women can be positioned in relation to issues of homosexuality and homophobic performance. Can the deliberate delight in the exposure of young men be seen as an indication that young women are more comfortable with homosexuality? Or is it, rather, a counter indication that the homophobia of young women is played out in different ways? In order to explore these questions I will now draw upon a Lacanian framework to offer an account of the acquisition of gender identity and, in particular, the development of female subjectivity⁵.

⁵ I am indebted to Kate Corr for a consideration of these themes.

In Lacanian psychoanalysis gendered subjectivity is acquired at the end of a long period of infant development through the splitting of the Ego and the resolution of the Oedipal and castration complexes. These processes mark the transition of the Subject from the pre-discursive domain of the Imaginary into the Symbolic order. The domain of the Symbolic is constituted through language and the social organisation of signs and symbols which pre-exist the Subject. Entry into the Symbolic order enables the subject to take up a position within the realm of the social through the use of language which bespeaks a gender identified and gendered subject. Lacan describes the gendered 'I' as constructed through the opposition of the masculine which is positively signified and the feminine which is negatively signified. Within the Symbolic order the opposition of positive/negative, masculine/feminine is dependent on the possession or non-possession of the phallus. Here, the phallus can be understood as a signifier which is central to the organisation of the Symbolic order. The position of masculinity within the Symbolic can, therefore, be seen as one of inclusion where masculine subjects can assume the 'I' of patriarchal culture. Femininity, by contrast, can be viewed in Lacanian terms as a position of exclusion within the Symbolic, where female subjects are constructed into an identity as 'not-I' or Other *as against* the masculine 'I'. The 'not-I' of feminine subjectivity indicates that, within this schema, a woman can never have the phallus though she may, at times, *be it* (Lacan 1977).

I would like to suggest that Lacanian insights can help us to explore why girls may enjoy teasing boys in the context of a sex education class where the challenge to young men is organised around an implied homosexuality. The development of female subjectivity can be seen as a process marked by moments of accommodation and resistance to the domain of the Symbolic.

In moments of accommodation women make investments in discourses of femininity which confirm their 'not-I' status. As will be seen in the next chapter, the reading of teenage magazines such as *More!* and *Sugar* can be viewed as a practice which operates within the bounds of discourses of femininity where patriarchal culture is assumed and remains largely unchallenged. In moments of resistance to the Symbolic order, women reject the 'not-I' position through acts of power/mastery which enable an enactment and identification with the 'I' of patriarchal discourse. In using the language of popular culture in the context of the classroom rather than in friendship groups, young women are able to demonstrate a knowledge and familiarity with sexual themes which offers them a sense of personal power in relation to young men in the class. This shift in relations of power suggests the instability of gender categories where 'I' and 'not-I' subject positions can be contested. The articulation of boy-to-boy attraction voiced in Sara's letter and the responses of other young women in the class present a challenge to the coherence of masculine subjectivity through the re-appropriation of discourses of femininity. This momentary inversion of the Symbolic order indicates that the exchange between males and females in the class represents a struggle over gendered subjectivity where homosexuality becomes a strategy for rupturing the gendered 'I' and a point of resistance to the 'not-I'. Seeing the exchange in terms of gender and power suggests the fragility of gendered subjectivities where homosexuality may be constructed as Other for male and female subjects. This can be seen in the 'not me' voices and expressions of disgust from boys and girls in the class. The breakdown in social order in the classroom and the treatment of homosexuality as a difference to be expelled and denied indicates that, for some participants in this discussion, the search for the consolidation of a coherent identity is premised upon heterosexuality and the regulation of desire.

Concluding comments

By conducting an analysis of one sex education class my intention was to explore, firstly, the ways in which sexualities can be lived out within the context of the school and, secondly, the difficulties involved in the practice of sex education. The 'problems' written by members of this Year 10 class and the subsequent discussion of them within a sex education programme offers us an insight into these areas. Many of the letters suggest that sexualities are developed and experienced in relation to dominant sex/gender categories where a strong link is made between gender appropriate behaviour and sexual identities. Thus, we see a concern with heterosexual relationships articulated differently in terms of gender where issues of time and independence become features of a male perspective while health issues, emotional uncertainty and powerlessness feature in accounts from young women.

Contribution and participation in the class can also be read as gender inflected with young women taking the initiative in the reading and discussion of the 'problems'. Six out of the seven letters discussed in the lesson were written by young women, who also featured more prominently in the follow-up discussions than male members of the class. Deborah Lupton and John Tulloch (1996) and Lynda Measor et al. (1996) comment on the non-participation of boys in sex education classes which can be variously interpreted as bravado, anxiety and resistance. The marginalisation of boys' voices in the 'agony aunt' lesson can be seen in terms of their lack of familiarity with the problem page format and a seeming reluctance to appropriate the language and themes of popular cultural forms in ways that relate to their concerns, experiences and notions of gender identity. The recourse to dominant sex/gender categories in the 'problems' and

discussion of them points to the productive possibilities of problematising such categories in educational settings. Lynn Segal (1990) suggests intensive, anti-sexist consciousness raising for young people in schools and youth organisations as a way of developing awareness of sexual power, especially in relation to date rape. The sex education lessons I observed indicate that such an approach could be usefully extended to include a critical take on gender and gender appropriate behaviour where some of the insecurities and contradictions of gender identity could be broached.

Letters written by young women suggest that sexuality is a site for the playing out of fears and desires where aspects of popular culture can be utilised as referents and resources in the articulation of sexual themes. The agony aunt format offers students the opportunity to respond creatively to the identification of sexual themes and issues which can be seen as a projection of their internal and external concerns in the domain of the sexual. Their letters find ways of speaking the unspeakable which are both imaginative and revealing in their identification of issues which constitute significant absences in the sex education programme. The agony aunt format facilitates discussion of issues which were not part of the sex education programme such as rape/sexual abuse, homosexuality and masturbation/indecent exposure. The expression of these 'problems' often contrasts sexual knowledge with emotional insecurity suggesting that the experience of sexuality for young women may be located within competing discourses of sexual health and romantic love. Here, fear of pregnancy and HIV is interwoven with concerns regarding sexual reputation, constancy and betrayal. Laura's letter, further suggests a link between desire for, and fear of, sexual intercourse which is intimately bound up with internal repressions and external relations. The complexity of these lived relations have implications for our understanding of sex education as a difficult, even

‘impossible’, practice.

The ways in which the letters are discussed in the class offer an insight into sex education as a practice where approaches to sexuality are outlined in particular ways. Within the pedagogic practice of sex education, sexuality can be seen as a site for the construction of boundaries which demarcates the terrain for the articulation of sexual themes. Michelle Fine (1988) identifies three discourses which characterise debates over sex education: sexuality as violence; sexuality as victimisation and sexuality as individual morality.

These discourses are also present, in disparate ways, in the Class 10 lesson where the discussion is constructed around issues of sexual threat and personal responsibility. The ‘agony aunt’ task indicates that sex-as-danger and a source of problems offers a ‘safe’ way of discussing sexuality which is appropriate to the genre of problem pages and the sex education class.

Within this format teacher and pupils can utilise the language of popular culture and medical/sexual health discourses to create a school story of sexuality which offers an individualised and decontextualised approach to sexual issues. The construction of boundaries, however, also offers scope for multiple transgressions (Thomson & Scott 1991; Kehily & Nayak 1996) which can be seen in the letters dealing with sexual abuse, homosexuality and indecent exposure. Here, young women find creative ways to risk the introduction of difficult and prohibited subjects. The energy and agency of pupils in this field suggests that sex education programmes cannot necessarily control the ways in which sexuality is spoken and *lived* in educational arenas.

The next chapter follows up the themes of gender identity and popular cultural forms introduced in this chapter. Chapter 5 deals specifically with the ways in which young people relate to and read magazines aimed at an

adolescent female market. In this chapter we have observed the ways in which young men appear reluctant to appropriate and use the language of teenage magazines. It has been suggested in this chapter that, for young males, demonstrating competency in this field may risk identification with the feminine. In the following chapter this idea is explored in more detail. The practice and implications of female readership are also explored further.

CHAPTER 5

More Sugar? Teenage magazines, gender displays and sexual learning

Introduction

This chapter will look at the ways in which magazines aimed at an adolescent female market can be seen as a cultural resource for learning about issues of gender and sexuality. The chapter will explore the ways in which sexual issues are presented for young women through the magazine format. This is followed by an analysis of the ways in which young women and young men read, discuss and negotiate these media messages. Using ethnographic material combined with textual analysis of teenage magazines, the chapter outlines a complex process of negotiation through which young people *read* the material and the messages within the social context of friendship groups and personal experiences. The chapter argues that acts of readership within the school context produce enactments of femininity and masculinity which can be seen as *gender displays* which provide a space for the constitution and public exhibition of sex-gender identities.

It is not uncommon for teen magazines to get a bad press. They have been variously viewed as poor quality dross for the undiscerning masses (Alderson 1968) and as 'ideology purveyors' producing and reproducing a culture of femininity which provides young women with limited and limiting ways of making sense of their experiences (McRobbie 1978a, 1978b, 1981, 1991; Tinkler, 1995). Magazine scholarship has explored the enduring popularity of magazines for women and the ways in which the magazine can be seen to provide a space for the construction of normative femininity (McRobbie 1996). Through this extensive literature it is possible to trace key themes in feminist scholarship more generally: a concern with issues of

power and subordination, a consideration of the pleasures of femininities and, more recently, a recognition of the 'failure' of identity and the impossibility of coherence at the level of the Subject. Studies of magazines have been marked by two distinct methodological approaches; textual analysis focusing on the magazine and its associative meanings, and audience ethnography exploring the ways in which readers make sense of the text. Studies of magazines aimed at a female readership initially pointed to the many ways in which the stories and features of the magazine format could be *bad-for-you*, directly connecting the femininity represented in the pages with the oppressive structures and practices of patriarchal society (McRobbie 1978a, 1978b; Winship 1985; Coward 1984; Tinkler 1995). Further work has indicated the complexity and agency involved in reading practices where pleasure and fantasy can become strategies for the organisation and verification of domestic routines and lived experience (Radway 1984; Hermes 1995). Psychoanalytically inflected studies point to the internal fracturing of the psyche and the conceptualisation of subjectivity as a site of struggle, suggesting that ideological messages can never be fully conveyed. Valerie Walkerdine's (1984) study of girls' comics explores the relationship of cultural products to the psychic production and resolution of desire. Walkerdine's analysis of *Bunty* indicates that reading practices involve formations of fantasy wherein desires take shape and conflicts can be resolved. From this perspective the consolidation of heterosexual relations can be seen as a product of the complex interplay of conscious and unconscious dynamics involved in the constitution of femininity.

From the perspective of educational research, it is possible to detect a disjuncture between education and popular culture. Earlier studies of pupil culture describe incidents where magazine readership is regarded as an inherently counter-school activity. Viv Furlong's (1976) study of interaction

sets in the classroom recounts an example of girl's reading 'comics' which are subsequently removed by the teacher. Similarly, in Fuller's (1984) study of Black girls in a London comprehensive school, the reading of magazines in class is generally understood, by teachers and pupils alike, as an "illegitimate activity" (1984: 83) to be ranked alongside chatting and avoiding work as strategies of opposition. Such strategies could be utilised by pupils at certain moments to register their intolerance of school routines. These incidents are suggestive of the ways in which dominant educational discourses have traditionally eschewed 'the popular' as intellectually impoverished and unworthy of critical attention. By contrast, the official school curriculum has occupied a reified status which bespeaks erudition, refinement and self-improvement while concealing the 'inherited selections of interests' (Williams 1965: 172) which constitute it.

Educationalists have documented the ways in which the 'new' sociology of education of the 1960s began to ask critical questions about educational values and the role of the school (see, for example, Hammersley & Woods 1976; Whitty 1985 for a discussion of these themes). This emergent body of work was directly concerned with children's learning in relation to issues of social class and educational achievement and drew upon ethnographic methods to explore such themes. Educational researchers of this period focused their attention on processes within the school to address issues of *what* was learned and *how* it was learned (eg. Hargreaves 1967; Lacey 1970). The concept of 'hidden curriculum' came to be widely used to describe how the world of learning appeared from the perspective of the learner. As Hammersley & Woods (1976) articulated it,

Instead of school achievement being taken to be the product of some mysterious 'intelligence', people began to ask, What

exactly are pupils required to learn in school? The obverse of this was also posed at the same time: Is there something else besides the official curriculum that is learned? (Hammersley & Woods 1976: 2).

Here, there was an acknowledgement that 'learning' extended the boundaries of the official curriculum and may have inadvertent effects; what is learned by pupils is not necessarily what is intended by teachers and educational policy-makers. Hammersley & Woods further suggest that *what* pupils learn, as gleaned from research of the period, can be seen in terms of conformity to school values. Through participation in school routines, pupils 'learn' to conform or resist the official culture of the school as elaborated in the identification of pro-school and anti-school groupings in studies such as Rosser & Harre (1976) *The Meaning of Trouble* and Willis (1977) *Learning to Labour*.

This chapter focuses upon 'conformity' and 'learning' of a different sort. I would like to suggest that the 'hidden curriculum' can also be seen in terms of the regulation of sex-gender categories. Within the context of school much informal learning takes place concerning issues of gender and sexuality; the homophobia of young men, the sexual reputations of young women and the pervasive presence of heterosexuality as an 'ideal' and a practice mark out the terrain for the production of gendered and sexualised identities. Furthermore, such social learning is overt and explicit rather than 'hidden'. Specifically, this chapter explores the ways in which magazines aimed at an adolescent female market can be seen as cultural resources for learning about issues of sexuality. In focusing on magazine readership in school I am interested in investigating the following research questions: In what way is the school a site for learning in relation to issues of gender and

sexuality? What do young people learn about gender and sexuality in this context? My analysis suggests that, through engagement with popular cultural forms, young people produce sex-gender identities which provide an arena for the negotiation of peer group friendships and the consolidation of heterosexual relations. My conversations with young people in school suggest that they are *critical* readers of popular culture who engage with text in productive ways. They are aware of the ways in which sexual issues are presented to them through the magazine format; this awareness contrasts and occasionally overlaps with sexual learning in more formal contexts such as sex education classes. Moreover, the comments of young people I spoke with suggest that they have developed a range of strategies for reading, discussing and negotiating these media messages.

Magazines in context

Recently, in the British context, there has been some debate concerning appropriate reading material for adolescent girls. Teenage magazines such as *More!* and *Sugar* have been at the centre of this controversy. Media attention in the form of news items on television and in the tabloid press have suggested that these teen magazines are too sexually explicit for young women. Concerns over the 'corruption' of adolescent girls have found voice in governmental debates and legislative proposals with a Member of Parliament, Peter Luff, declaring that the magazines 'rob girls of their innocence'⁶. Concerns expressed at this level can be seen, in part, as the articulation of a broader 'moral panic' relating to teenage pregnancy, single

⁶ *Newsnight* report, BBC 2, 5.2.96. Peter Luff M.P. tabled a private members bill in the House of Commons which called for a party political consensus on parental duties and responsibilities re. adolescents and the censorship of teenage magazines as suitable for specific age ranges. Teen magazines were also the subject of a Radio 4 phone-in programme, *Call Nick Ross*, 6.2.96.

motherhood and the provision of state benefits.

During my fieldwork for this thesis I found that young people frequently used popular cultural forms as a resource and a framework for discussing issues of sexuality. Plots from the soaps such as *Brookside* and *Eastenders*, characters such as Hannah in *Neighbours*, episodes of *Byker Grove* and TV personalities such as Barrymore were cited and used as reference points in discussions of sexual relationships, physical attraction, parental constraints and homosexuality. These cultural references acted like roadmaps whereby students could negotiate the hazardous terrain of sexual taboo. They also provided a frame, or way of looking at sexuality through which students could juxtapose their personal experiences to media constructions. Teen magazines can be seen as part of this broader social context; they are a popular, mass produced and publicly shared media form which speaks to young people in particular ways and enables them to talk back. In this way teen magazines can be seen as a cultural resource for young people which they can, at different moments, 'talk with' and 'think with'.

All of the young women I spoke to, and some of the young men, were regular readers of magazines aimed at an adolescent female market. The young people frequently mentioned magazines such as *Bliss*, *Mizz*, *More!*, *Sugar*, *Just Seventeen* and *Nineteen*, with *Sugar* being the most popular and *More!* the most controversial. The young women were aware of the magazines as playing a part in a developmental process which was guided by age and gender.

Sophie : I think that *More* is for older girls really. Like the younger ones (magazines) where you've got, you've got ponies and stuff

Naomi: And pictures of kittens

Sophie: Yeah, there's like *Girlltalk* and *Chatterbox* and you go up and you get *Shout* and then you get *Sugar* and *Bliss* and then it's like *Just Seventeen*, *Nineteen* and then it's *More!* and then it's *Woman's Own* and stuff like that. So you got the range.

The 'going up' that Sophie refers to can be related to the gendered experience of moving from girlhood to adolescence and into womanhood in relation to particular magazines which may be seen as cultural markers in the developmental process. The reproduction of a specific class-cultural femininity is naturalised within the magazines through an appeal which is based on the seemingly 'natural' categories of age and gender. Angela McRobbie (1978a; 1978b; 1981; 1991) has commented on the ways in which *Jackie* magazine of the 70s introduced the girl to adolescence by mapping out the personal terrain, 'outlining its landmarks and characteristics in detail and stressing the problematic features as well as fun' (1991: 83). McRobbie's analysis of the multiple ways in which *Jackie* worked demonstrates that the different features of the magazine are involved in reproducing a *culture of femininity* cohering around the concept of romance. From this perspective *Jackie* can be seen as preparatory literature for a feminine, rather than a feminist career; the search for a 'fella', the privileging of 'true love' and an induction into repetitive beauty routines which can be seen as an introduction to domestic labour. Penny Tinkler (1995) in her study of popular magazines for girls during the period 1920-1950 similarly suggests that these magazines actively 'construct girlhood' by according significance to age, social class and girls' position in the heterosexual career.

Martin Barker's (1989) research suggests other ways of looking at these magazines which problematise the feminist assumption that *Jackie* is 'bad for girls'. His analysis indicates that a knowledge of the history of the production of magazines can contribute to an understanding of the ways in which magazines can be seen as specific cultural products, produced within a context of technical and social compromises and constraints which change over time. Factors relating to the physical production of magazines such as machinery, resources, artistic input and marketing, complexify notions of 'reproduction' whereas simply seeing *Jackie* as an ideological purveyor of a culture of femininity overlooks many other factors which *make* the magazine what it is. Barker's reading of *Jackie* postulates that the magazine has an agenda that is based on 'living out an unwritten contract with its readers' (1989: 165). The 'contract' is premised on active engagement of the reader with the magazine - the magazine invites a reader to collaborate by reading in particular ways:

The 'contract' involves an agreement that a text will talk to us in ways we recognise. It will enter into a dialogue with us. And that dialogue, with its dependable elements and form, will relate to some aspects of our lives in our society (Barker 1989: 261).

Barker points out that the contractual understanding between magazine and implied reader is reliant on social context. The act of reading can be seen as a process which creates feelings of mutual recognition and familiarity between the reader and the features of the magazine. Barker's reading of *Jackie* and other magazines develops a textual analysis which emphasises the interactive engagement of the reader with the magazine, through which both parties are involved in a conversation premised on shared social experiences

and expectations. By contrast, Joke Hermes' (1995) study of the readership of women's magazines proffers an analysis based on interviews with women who identify themselves as readers of women's magazines. Her audience research indicates that the reading practices of women are mediated by the context of their everyday lives. The 'pickupable' and 'putdownable' quality of magazines fits in with daily domestic routines women describe and participate in. This contributes to the magazines' popular appeal as an appropriate companion for women in moments of 'relaxation', signifying the demarcation of personal space within a busy day. I am indebted to feminist scholarship on magazines and in particular the insights of Barker and Hermes where the use of different methodological approaches contributes to our understanding of magazines and acts of readership. Barker (1989) and Hermes (1995) illustrate how the reading of magazines can be seen, respectively, as a contractual understanding between reader and magazine and an integral part of everyday routines in the lives of women. The ethnographic study I conducted develops this analysis by illustrating how the reading of magazines by students in school is shaped by the context of school relations where *gender displays* are enacted collectively through friendship groups and peer relations. This approach builds upon and develops the observations of the previous chapters which note the discursive strategies deployed in school settings in relation to issues of sexuality (see chapter 3) and the ways in which these discursive strategies are translated into the curriculum at the level of pedagogic practice (as discussed in chapters 3 and 4).

School-based reading practices and gender difference

My group work discussions with young women and young men in school indicated that gender played a key role in shaping the attitudes and practices through which young people read magazines. This theme is

further elaborated by researchers in this field where there is an acknowledgement of the significance of gender to reading patterns and levels of literacy among school-age students (see, for example, Alloway & Gilbert 1997; Davies 1997; Millard 1997). Within this literature the investments in particular reading practices by young women provide a point of contrast with the non-participation of young men. Many young women I talked with spoke of magazine reading as a regular collective practice. Within the context of the school day this involved the reading of magazines in breaks and lunchtime as well as in certain lessons such as drama, English and Personal and Social Education where the magazine features and format could inform discussions and classroom activities.

MJK: Do you read the magazines together?

Ruth: We used to, all the time...

Amy: Sometimes we do.

Ruth: When we've got a magazine we do, we have a good laugh.

Joanne: Like if one person buys it and brings it into school, we all look through it together, so we don't buy four separate copies.

Amy: Some of them make you laugh though, don't they?

For these young women reading magazines can be seen as a shared, school-based activity which female friendship groups draw upon as a resource for

humour. Here the 'contract' between the magazine and the reader which Barker refers to has been extended to the friendship group where readership offers the group the opportunity for dialogue at the level of collective experience. McRobbie (1981) has commented on the way in which girls' collective reading of *Jackie* may be oppositional, citing an example of a group of girls truanting from lessons to do a *Jackie* quiz in the toilets. Within the school context such activities can be seen as a point of resistance to the organisational structure of the school day where magazine reading serves to disrupt and fracture everyday routines rather than fit in with them. However, as Walkerdine (1990) has pointed out, not all acts of resistance against school authority have revolutionary effects: they may have 'reactionary' effects too. In this case young women locate themselves within a class-cultural dynamic where they actively choose reading magazines and 'learning' femininity as an alternative to attending lessons (see also Nava 1984).

By contrast, the reading of magazines did not appear to occupy a similar social space among male peer groups. In a group work session with boys, the suggestion that they might read magazines which speak to them of social/sexual issues appears to generate feelings of emasculation and suspicion.

MJK: Do you wish there was a boys' magazine?

Blake: Nah, you'd get called a sissy wouldn't you?

(all laugh)

Christopher: Well there are some like *Loaded* and there's *Q* and

Maxim as well with things like football, sex and clothes and -

Blake: You're an expert you are!

(all laugh)

MJK: If there was a magazine like that for your age group -
what about that?

Andrew: Yeah, I wouldn't mind buying a magazine like that
sometimes but I wouldn't, like the girls do, buy it every week,
that's just too - I wouldn't like that. I'd only buy it when there
was something in it like an article or something. You know,
sometimes like when you get into a situation and you don't
know what you're doing it would help then if there was a
magazine to tell you what to do then.

The responses of the boys indicate that their reading of magazines is more of
an individual than a group activity as it is for girls. The boys indicate that
reading magazines risks being regarded as 'sissy', a derogatory term
suggesting such practices could be less than manly. Eric Rofes (1995)
documents the painful experiences of 'sissy' boys in the American school
system where bullying and abuse become part of a process of Othering,
establishing differences between
dominant and subordinate groups of males (see also Haywood 1996; Mac an
Ghaill 1996 and Kehily & Nayak 1997 for a further discussion of
masculinities and the production of heterosexual hierarchies in educational
settings). Rofes notes that, 'sissy boys have become contemporary youth's
primary exposure to gay identity' (1995: 81). The shared laughter of Blake,

Andrew and Christopher at Blake's connection of magazine readership for males with being a 'sissy' indicates that there is group recognition/surveillance relating to gender appropriate behaviour for young males⁷. Here, the reading of teen magazines comes dangerously close to falling beyond the bounds of publicly acceptable behaviour for male peer groups. Christopher's awareness of magazines aimed at a male readership and his willingness to name and discuss them is viewed by Blake as a form of 'expertise' which generates more laughter. In the context of male peer groups in school, Christopher's 'knowledge' may be hazardous to the presentation of a socially recognised male identity. Andrew's comments specifically locate magazines as a manual or reference book to be consulted as and when necessary to solve particular individual problems. His expressed distaste for regular readership 'like the girls do' is suggestive of the resonant interplay of internal anxieties and external policing where there may be a fear of dependency and a need to display an emotional self-sufficiency based on investments in an imagined masculine ideal.

Hermes (1995) notes the enjoyment of gossip magazines among certain gay men where a camp fantasy world of appearances, trivia and 'bad taste' is celebrated. Here pleasure in subversion turns the reading of gossip magazines into a 'performative art' (Hermes 1995: 137) and establishes points of difference between gays and dominant culture. This social practice contrasts sharply with the group of boys in school who articulate their ideas within a dominant culture of masculinity in which an unspoken desire to assert themselves as heterosexual structures the discussion (see also Chapter 6). The boys' attempt to distance themselves from the perceived reading

⁷ See Thorne (1993) for a discussion of gender appropriate categories and the possibilities and constraints for 'gender crossing' among boys and girls.

practices of girls may be voicing a fear of camp, whereby to embrace magazines in the same way as girls would create internal anxieties about becoming gay/female or 'sissy' as Blake puts it. The comments of the boys in relation to magazine readership is suggestive of the complex dynamics involved in the relationship between cultural forms and the constitution of gendered subjectivities. For the young men in this group there is a collective investment in forms of masculinity premised upon heterosexual desire and the enactment of a gendered identity defined *as against* females and gay men (Connell 1989; Mac an Ghaill 1994; Nayak & Kehily 1996). In this exchange the concern to demonstrate competence, self-reliance and an independence from cultural products become signifiers for a particular, publicly displayed and socially validated form of masculinity.

Treatment of homosexual themes by teen magazines such as *More!* and *Sugar* do little to challenge the homophobias present within pupil sexual cultures. A 'real-life drama' in *More!* publicised on the front cover as, 'My gay friend Ian stole my man!' illustrates some of the ways in which homosexuality is positioned as a deviant and marginal practice, existing at the fringes of a centred and normalising heterosexuality. Tina tells her story of meeting her 'soulmate', Jules, and discovering he is gay by reading his diary:

I'll never forget the hideous, sick feeling that swept over me.
As I turned each page , details of their secret liaisons leapt out...
It described 'rolling around together' and kissing. Thank God
there were no descriptions of full sex (*More!* 1995: Issue 198).

Tina's description of the gay relationship between Jules and Ian reveals a strong sense of repulsion and disgust. The 'hideous, sick feeling'

experienced when gay sexual practices are inferred contrasts sharply with the normalisation of heterosexual penetrative sex, visibly displayed on other pages of the magazine. Tina's narrative can be read teleologically, pathologising Jules' homosexuality and problematising their relationship in the light of her discovery. The realisation that Jules 'simply was gay' engages Tina in a reconstruction of their past in which a low sex drive, lack of excitement during sex, sexual conservatism and an absence of jealousy now become signifiers of a latent homosexuality. Tina's account moves towards narrative closure with her reflections on meeting her new partner, David:

It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I'd forgotten what it was like to have sex more than once and not just in the missionary position. But I asked David early on, 'Are you sure you don't prefer men?' It's an odd question to ask, but I never want that to happen to me again. Now I feel lucky I didn't marry Jules, have two kids and find out the truth when I was 40 (*More!* 1995, Issue 198).

Tina's good fortune is seen as an escape from the inadequacies of gay masculinity where to marry someone who also enjoys same sex relationships would ultimately be a regrettable error and a waste of a life. The presence of homophobias in pupil cultures and teen magazines is illustrative of the different ways in which sexualities are regulated. Gendered differences in reading practices and the associated meanings generated collectively by boys and girls in school reveal that teen magazines are more likely to be a cultural resource for sexual learning among young women than among young men. This has implications for classroom practice and, particularly, the ways in which Personal and Social Education programmes relate to

young men.

Sexual learning - problem pages

Problem pages in magazines can be seen as an interactive space specifically set up for producers of the magazine and readers to engage in dialogue.

Rosalind Coward (1984) comments on the spectacle of public confession to be found in problem pages which encourage readers to view these pages as a distinct sub-genre of sexual fiction producing culturally specific ways of knowing oneself:

problem pages are themselves a historically specific symptom of the way in which sexuality and its emotional consequences have been catapulted to the foreground in our culture as the true expression of our intimate selves (Coward 1984: 137).

The incitement to share problems, particularly sexual problems can be seen as constitutive of a sexualised subjectivity, a *technology* bringing into being a discursively produced 'deep' self that can be situated within a field of social regulation (Foucault 1976). My research findings suggest that young women *self-regulate* their use of magazines to enable discussion and informal learning of sexual issues. Problem pages in particular are read and discussed collectively by young women in school. Young women appropriate the discourse of teen magazines and demonstrate a confidence in this field as I discussed in the previous chapter. Problem pages are viewed collectively by pupils as a 'laugh', not to be taken seriously, and, simultaneously, as a way of framing personal problems, emotional concerns and 'boy trouble'. Boys and girls in school shared a scepticism and enjoyment of problem pages, often mentioning the problem page as the first page they turn to when they open a magazine. The following extract

demonstrates the ways in which young women distance themselves from the problem page and, at the same time, find the feature compelling.

Rebecca: Yeah, the agony aunts, they're good.

Sophie: They're good because a lot of people enjoy reading that sort of page, if you buy a magazine you go straight to the problems for the information.

Julia: Yeah!

Rebecca: Yeah you read the problem but not the advice.

(all laugh)

MJK: Why is the problem more interesting than the advice?

Rebecca: I don't know, it just is.

Sophie: Some people find it really ... fascinating.

Julia: Yeah if the problem is to do with you then you read the advice but otherwise you just go on to the next one (problem).

Rebecca, Sophie and Julia suggest that the 'fascination' of the problem page lies primarily in reading about a problem where the 'information' to be gleaned is contained within the problem as the reader expresses it rather than in advice given by the experienced agony aunt (see Lee 1983: 80-91 for an interesting discussion of the difficulties of being an 'agony aunt').

However, if the problem is 'to do with you' and can be seen as an articulation of your own situation in some way, then advice may be read. McRobbie (1978a) asserts that the problem page in *Jackie*, known as the 'Cathy and Claire' page, 'sums up the ideological content of the magazine' (1978a: 29) by giving girls culturally loaded messages in the form of guidance to be heeded by the sensible girl. Barker's (1989) analysis of the Cathy and Claire page found most advice to be 'specific and commonsensical' (1989: 160) where girls are encouraged to take a close look at themselves, their reasons for writing, their personality and self confidence. He suggests that the significance of the Cathy and Claire page revolves around girls being asked to engage in a personal reevaluation, to look in at themselves in different ways and to see their feelings and emotions from other perspectives. My ethnographic evidence, however, suggests that the advice is of marginal interest and the focus of appeal for young people in schools is in *the problem itself* which may be read in friendship groups and discussed critically in terms of pleasure, humour, empathy and disbelief:

Andrew: Some of them (problems) are pretty terrible, I reckon some people just write for fun. When you're reading them - they can't possibly be for real

Christopher: You can't take them seriously

Tim: Yeah, you can't take them seriously

Andrew: You can't imagine someone not knowing stuff like that

MJK: So you think that some people, they haven't got a problem really but they just sit down and -

Andrew: Yeah, just write in for a joke, see if it gets published or not, just for something to do

The views of the boys express a disdain of ignorance, 'you can't imagine people not knowing stuff like that' which is working with a sense of amusement and 'fun' where writing to problem pages can be seen a practical joke to relieve boredom and generate humour. In this exchange Andrew, Christopher and Tim position themselves as knowledgeable and discerning readers able to detect the 'for real' problems from the wind-ups. Problems which do not appear credible are not worthy of being taken seriously. Viewing the problems with a sense of disbelief which can be explained in terms of ignorance or tomfoolery enables these young men to establish a distance from the feature and the problems. The incredulity of the boys was also shared by many of the girls I spoke with:

Clare: They (the problems) look as though they're made up.

Ruth: They do, some of them are really silly.

Joanne: Sometimes it's like really serious 'cos we have them in Drama when you're reading it and some of them are just, you know, really serious.

Amy: You wouldn't say that kind of thing or put it in a magazine or even write it -

Joanne: If you're desperate you would.

Ruth: Yeah!

Clare: Yeah!

Amy: You know, they don't sound real.

Clare: Half the time I think they're made up, people do it for a laugh and then they (staff at the magazine) take it seriously, or the editors make them up.

Ruth: At the start of, like, *Sugar*, when *Sugar* first came out there was a problem page in it and, like, how d'you know where to write to 'cos the magazine hasn't come out yet.

Clare: Well maybe they just make up the first ones.

In this discussion the group of girls work through their feelings of disbelief, empathy and deception which contribute to the contradictory appeal of problem pages. The 'silliness' of some problems and the 'seriousness' of others combine to create distrust of the feature, grounded in evidence that new magazines have problem pages in their first issue before a readership has been established. The deception involving readers and editors fabricating problems is punctured at one moment when Joanne asserts that if you were 'desperate' you would write to a problem page. This is echoed by the affirming voices of Ruth and Clare. Joanne, Ruth and Clare are responding to Amy's point that some problems as printed in magazines transgress certain boundaries by speaking the unspeakable, 'You wouldn't

say that kind of thing or put it in a magazine or even write it'. The responses of the other girls indicate that, in cases of extreme distress, *you would* talk about taboo subjects. This understanding that the magazine can assist in difficulties by placing them 'out there' simultaneously gives girls license to discuss these issues among themselves. From this perspective problem pages can be seen to open up areas for discussion by giving young women access to a particular discourse; ways of talking about issues and emotions, giving experiences a vocabulary within the language of the felt. My discussions with young men and women indicate that young people collectively negotiate their responses to problem page features within the context of friendship groups. Here, friends act as mediators and regulators of 'problems', determining whether they should be dismissed, humoured, taken seriously or discussed further. The activities of young men and women in this respect indicates that, within the context of the school, peer group relations play an important part in the social regulation of sexual discourse, offering a sphere for conveying sex-gender identities. The gendered dynamics of these exchanges illustrate the distancing displays of young men in relation to cultural products and sexual problems while young women appear more open to discussion in this area.

Sexual learning and cultures of femininity

The problem pages, like other regular features of the magazine such as the stories and fashion pages, present points of continuity for readers, providing them with a familiar format and set of expectations:

Sara: I find *Sugar* good value.

Laura: I like *Sugar*, I get *Sugar*.

Catherine: *Just Seventeen*, I get that every week.

Sara: In every issue of *Sugar* there's always something about sex, something involving sex.

Catherine: There's like good stories in there as well, really interesting stuff ... Someone with really bad problems will write in and they get really helped and next month they write back and say 'Thank you' and a bit of their little note will be in there saying 'Thank you' and stuff like that.

Here, the agreement that *Sugar* is 'good value' and a good read is supported by Sara, Laura and Catherine. A salient feature of every issue is 'something involving sex' as Sara puts it. This 'something' could be expressed in the problem page or in the story feature. The comments of the girls suggest that problems and stories are read alongside one another and conform to their expectations of the magazine speaking to them about sex. The problem page in particular provides a direct link between the magazine and the reader by creating a cozy, interactive environment in which intimacies can be shared. Catherine's comments suggest that individuals can be 'helped' by the problem page which provides a linear trace of events through the problem, advice offered and expressions of gratitude.

Teen magazines containing features on sex and readers expecting to be informed and entertained by the sexual content of the magazine can be seen as partners in the contractual understanding that Barker (1989) refers to. However, the young women I spoke to indicated that this source of sexual knowledge is viewed critically by individuals and mediated by friendship groups. *More!* magazine in particular aroused controversy among the young women:

Clare: But that *More!* really goes into it. I mean some of the stories are, you know, you wouldn't want to tell anybody about 'em. Like, if you look in those other magazines they say, 'My boyfriend did this and what can I do?' and a story and there's other stories you would want to tell your friends at your age. But that *More!* magazine, it's more, you know, for seventeen year olds to read 'cos it goes too into depth with them

Amy: In fairness to *More!* though, it aims at a higher age group, so, like, it's younger peoples' fault if they read it, or their mom and dads' fault.

MJK: But you'd find, like, things in, say, *Sugar*, you'd all talk about among yourselves?

Clare: Yeah

Amy: Yeah we would

Ruth: Yeah

Amy: But you couldn't do the same with *More!* magazine.

MJK: Because of embarrassment?

Amy: It is yeah. You say, 'Oh I saw this in this magazine' and then everybody starts laughing at you.

Clare: Yeah, it just goes over the top really.

In this discussion Clare, Amy and Ruth suggest that *More!* breaks the contract between magazine and readers by being too sexually explicit. By printing stories 'you wouldn't want to tell anybody about' *More!* is placed beyond the collective reading practices of these young women. The embarrassment of the young women suggests that their reputations may be tainted by reading and embracing *More!* magazine. Amy's comments, particularly, indicate that to repeat features to friends may result in embarrassment and humiliation, 'everybody starts laughing at you'. This collective action which relies on humour to deride and 'other' a member of the group is illustrative of the ways in which these young women negotiate some subjects deemed appropriate for discussion and successfully marginalise others. This active engagement with issues arising from the reading of magazines suggests that female friendship groups provide a site for the enactment of particular cultures of femininity (Hey 1997; Skeggs 1997). This culture of femininity may, at moments, work to expel other cultures of femininity such as those contained in the pages of *More!* magazine and external to the friendship group. In this context the 'too in depth' and 'over the top' features of *More!* transgress the boundaries of legitimacy defined by these young women as suitable for their age group and feminine identities. Cindy Patton (1993) has commented on the ways in which identities carry with them a 'requirement to act which is felt as "what a person like me does"' (1993: 147). Clare, Amy and Ruth indicate that female friendship groups adopt a collective 'requirement to act' in relation to issues of sexuality which appears to be anchored in an agreed notion of 'what girls like us do'. This action can be seen to be concerned with the establishment and maintenance of a particular moral agenda which marks out the terrain for discussion and/or action. Female friendship groups, in moments of collective action, 'draw the line' (Canaan 1986: 193) to demarcate

the acceptable from the unacceptable. In these moments female friendship groups incorporate spheres or practices they feel comfortable with and displace practices that do not concur with their collectively defined feminine identities. In Canaan's (1986) U.S. study concerning middle-class young women and sexuality, young women who do not 'draw the line' incur a reputation as 'the other kinda girl' (1986: 190), the sexually promiscuous and much denigrated female figure whose lack of adherence to conventional morality serves as a 'cautionary tale' for young women to be ever vigilant in the maintenance of their reputation⁸. The collective activity of female friendship groups in relation to the reading of teenage magazines can be seen as part of a constant and sustained engagement in the production of school-based femininities. These processes involve the continual negotiation and delineation of acceptable and unacceptable forms of behaviour/action which bespeak and thereby bring into being feminine identities. The collective investment in particular feminine identities as expressed by the young women I spoke with reveals the associative link between magazine reading and identity work as mutually constitutive acts in their everyday social interactions in school. The creative energy involved in the constitutive enactment of a particular femininity is suggestive of the labour involved in the production of sex-gender identities and can be seen as an attempt to fix and consolidate continually shifting social and psychic locations.

More! is too much

Recently, McRobbie (1996) has commented on the ways in which contemporary teenage magazines such as *More!* embrace and display an

⁸ See also McRobbie & Garber 1982; Griffin 1982; Lees 1986, 1993, Cowie & Lees 1987 for a discussion of the ways in which young men draw upon patriarchal discourse where misogynist labelling and a concern with female sexual reputations become key markers for the construction of young women's identities.

intensification of interest in sexuality. She notes that this sexual material is marked by features such as exaggeration, self-parody and irony which suggest new forms of sexual conduct for young women:

this sexual material marks a new moment in the construction of female sexual identities. It proposes boldness (even brazenness) in behaviour... Magazine discourse brings into being new female subjects through these incitations (McRobbie 1996: 177-8).

My ethnographic evidence suggests that this 'new moment in the construction of female sexual identities' is actively resisted by the young women I spoke with. A closer look at the content of *More!* magazine may offer an insight into practices and behaviours which were points of concern for the young women. A regular feature of *More!* magazine is a two-page item called 'Sextalk'. This includes an assortment of information about sex such as answers to readers questions, sex definitions, sex 'factoids', short 'news' items and 'position of the fortnight' - a line drawing and explanatory text on positions for heterosexual penetrative sex such as 'backwards bonk' and 'side by side' (see appendix for an example of 'position of the fortnight'). The following are examples of a 'sex definition' and 'sex factoid' from two issues of *More!* :

Sex Factoid:

Once ejaculated, the typical sperm travels five-and-a-half inches an hour - that's about twice as fast as British Rail!
(*More!* 1995, Issue 198.)

Sex definition:

Penis Captivus

The act of holding his penis tightly in your vaginal muscles during sex (hold it too tight and he can develop a castration complex).

(*More!*, 1996, Issue 208.)

The combination of 'fact', definitions, drawings and advice found in 'Sextalk', expressed colloquially and with humour, points to a departure from the ideology of romance as expressed in teen magazines such as *Jackie* (McRobbie 1981; Winship 1985) and a move towards the *technology* of sex where consensual procedures organise and monitor human activity (Foucault 1976). From a Foucaultian perspective the proliferation of sexual material in teen magazines can be seen to demarcate a terrain for social regulation where the exercise of power is productive rather than repressive. Ways of having intercourse, things to try, things to ask 'your man' to try, ways of looking and thinking in relation to sex, privilege heterosexual penetrative intercourse as the cornerstone of sexual relationships. In the 'Sextalk' feature of *More!* magazine sexual activity is demystified through line drawings and instructive text, presented and discussed in ways that encode heterosexuality. This can be interpreted as the creation of a site where heterosex can be learned, desired and manipulated, where sexual experimentation and pleasure leads to a particular expertise. The link between sexual knowledge and pleasure established in the 'Sextalk' feature privileges sexual identity as a way of knowing our 'inner' selves and, of course, 'our man'. In this feature the magazine appropriates a discourse of sexual liberation as articulated in 1970s sex manuals such as the Alex Comfort collection, *The Joy of Sex* (Comfort 1974). Here, the language, style and diagrammatic mode of instruction suggests to young women that the

route to sexual emancipation lies in the 'doing it' and talking about 'doing it' of male-female fucking. Meryl Altman's (1984) study of 1970s sex manuals demonstrates the way in which anecdotes and clinical case studies are used in these texts and act as devices to inscribe ideology within the sex manual format. Altman argues that the combination of the familiar with the medical gives the texts an authoritative tone which conceals the fiction of ideological constructs. The 'Sextalk' feature can be viewed in a similar way as 'information' which utilises 'medical' and 'personal' discourses to impart ideological messages. However, my ethnographic evidence suggests that readers of the feature are not beguiled by the ideological content.

Many young women I spoke to regarded *More's* up-front, 'over the top' approach to sex as embarrassing, disgusting and 'too much' (Lara). The responses of many young women I spoke with indicate that *More!* literally is 'too much'; its sexual excesses denote that it is not to be taken seriously and requires regulation at the level of peer group interaction. Some young women reported that their parents had banned them from buying *More!*, while another said she had bought it once and 'binned it' (Joanne). In discussions I conducted with young women, the regular feature 'position of the fortnight' was spoken about in ways which fused embarrassment with a moral discourse of censorship and self-censorship:

Catrina: Oh, I saw that, totally -

Laura: Yeah

(all laugh)

Sara: Yes, well

Catherine: I don't think we should say anymore about that!

MJK: Are we talking about position of the fortnight?

(all laugh)

All: Yeah

Laura: My sister has one and it had like the best positions or something [unclear]

All: Ughhh

(muted laughter)

MJK: What do you think of that then?

Catherine: I think there should be age limits on that kind of thing.

Laura: There should be a lock on the front!

In this discussion the embarrassment of the young women can be seen in the half sentences, laughter and exclamations of disgust which reveal a reluctance to name and acknowledge the topic they are speaking about, 'I don't think we should say any more about that!'. My attempt to name and explore the issue in the question, 'Are we talking about position of the fortnight?' produces more laughter and embarrassment which further

suggests that *More!* transgresses the bounds of the speakable for these young women. Catherine and Laura's expression of censorship, 'I think there should be age limits on that kind of thing' and, 'There should be a lock on the front!' may indicate that appropriation of a moral, parental discourse, in this case, offers an unambiguous way of censoring 'position of the fortnight' which illustrates their distaste of the feature. For Catherine and Laura, explicit details of sex or as they put it, 'that kind of thing' is clearly not *their* kind of thing - a matter they feel comfortable with or wish to be associated with. In this exchange the young women discursively position themselves as untouched by the sexual material of *More!* and resistant to the possibility of the new female sexual subjectivities/behaviour referred to by McRobbie (1996). The moralism of the young women and expressions of disgust in relation to issues of sexuality finds points of resonance with Freudian analysis where childhood is seen as a period of (relative) sexual latency producing shame, disgust and claims of aesthetic and moral ideals which impede the course of the sexual instinct (Freud 1905). In the transition from childhood to adulthood these negative associations can be expressed and reconciled in the consolidation of heterosexual relations. The adverse reactions to the sexual content of *More!* can be seen to produce a moment of collective psychic and social positioning where young women take refuge in childhood approaches to sexuality rather than the older and potentially threatening domain offered by *More!* Of course, this does not mean that young women do not enjoy talking about sex or engaging in sexual activity. Rather, it suggests the power and agency of female friendship groups wherein, at certain moments, a collective approach to sexuality can be shared, regulated and expressed.

The jigsaw puzzle of sexual learning

At other moments, however, the young women I spoke with did discuss

issues of sex and sexuality in positive and affirming ways. In these discussions they suggested that some teen magazines such as *Sugar* and *Just Seventeen* were a useful source of information on sexual matters. Their comments in these examples indicate that magazines can serve as a supplement to formal sex education classes in school and other forms of communication on sex such as leaflets and discussions with parents and peers. Rachel Thomson and Sue Scott (1991) comment on the ways in which young women in their study pieced together information from different sources in their search for sexual knowledge:

The young women we spoke to reported learning by 'picking things up' and 'just catching on' ... [young women] would frequently search for sexual references in any available sources such as popular sex manuals, 'Jackie Collins' books and most commonly in magazines aimed at young women (Thomson & Scott 1991: 27-31).

Hermes (1995) suggests that women read magazines through a range of different repertoires where acts of readership engage them in ways of making sense of their experiences in relation to the contents of the magazine. The repertoire of 'emotional learning and connected knowing' is identified by Hermes as a way dealing with emotions, validating experience and developing understanding. In the following example young women 'connect' knowledge gained in a sex education class with pictorial advice in a magazine. In this case the sexual learning relates to a demonstration on the use of condoms:

MJK: What did you think of the putting the condoms on?

Ruth: That was good that was

Clare: It was good actually 'cos, like, I didn't know how to put it on (laughs)

Ruth: At least you got a chance to try

Joanne: It was in the magazines as well

Ruth: You can see what they're like in real life rather than just pictures ...

Joanne: Yeah, it was in that magazine wasn't it? The *Sugar* magazine and what to do, so if you did in class you'd know you can do it yourself, you build up a better picture.

In this example, school based sex education and commercially produced magazines can be seen to work together in a productive way, 'building up a better picture' by providing advice that young women find helpful. Hermes (1995) suggests that the repertoire of connected knowing offers the potential for developing understandings which can give women feelings of increased strength. This is both real and imagined as women *are* preparing themselves for difficulties and entertaining fantasies of *becoming* a 'wise woman'. The critical approach of young women in school suggest that magazines and acts of readership play a part in the connections and renunciations made in relation to sexual learning. Their comments indicate that popular cultural forms are continually mediated and negotiated collectively by female friendship groups. In such moments issues of sexuality can be opened up through shared reading and discussion and closed down through derisive

laughter, evasive manoeuvres and moral appeals. The actions and behaviour of young women indicate that they are discerning and self-regulating in relation to sexual matters and magazine readership. Their discriminating approach could be a valuable resource in sexuality education programmes where the use of teen magazines offers the potential for common ground between teachers and pupils' sexual cultures.

Connections and disconnections: the burden of assumed knowledge

The responses of young men, however, to areas of potential 'connected knowing' tell a different story. Here, the use of teen magazines in formal spaces such as sex education lessons produces embarrassment for boys and a reluctance to enter into the discourse of popular culture. Researchers have commented on the disruptive behaviour and non-participation of boys in school-based sex education programmes and the ways in which such programmes fail to meet the needs of young men (Lupton & Tulloch 1996; Measor et al 1996; Sex Education Forum 1997). In the previous chapter I discussed a Personal and Social Education lesson involving an activity where pupils were asked to create problems and share advice for a fictitious problem page. This activity sees girls as active and willing participants while boys attempt to enact a cool detachment from the imaginative exercise of writing and discussing 'problems'. Of the seven 'letters' read aloud by pupils, six were written by girls, with girls playing a more prominent part in the discussion of all 'problems'. A follow-up discussion with a group of girls reveals their awareness of the boys' unease and discomfort. They explained it in the following terms:

Joanne: The boys were dying of embarrassment!

(all laugh)

Ruth: Yeah, I know, maybe 'cos we read the magazines, they don't read them. Like for us there is a problem page in every magazine, girls magazine, but they don't have them in the boys magazines, like football magazines and that - you don't see a problem page - so that's probably why.

The comments of the girls indicate that they have a familiarity with problem pages which boys do not share. This gives the young women a vocabulary to articulate social/sexual problems based on collective experience and mutual recognition. The laughter of the girls suggests that they take pleasure in their shared knowledge and in the obvious embarrassment of the boys in the class. Researchers have commented on the ways in which young women actively use sexuality and an exaggerated femininity as a strategy to resist, challenge and embarrass teachers and boys (Anyon 1983; Lees 1986; Skeggs 1991; Kehily & Nayak 1996). Here, sexual knowledge developed within female friendship groups can become a way of disrupting dominant power relations when used in more formal contexts such as the classroom.

Follow-up discussion with a group of boys suggests that their lack of dialogue around certain issues may be part of a struggle to perform a coherent masculine identity (discussed further in Chapter 6) where boys' negotiation of discourse around emotions/feelings differs from that of girls :

MJK: Have you all - among yourselves - have you spoken about things on the (Sex Education) course?

James: Not really

Andrew: No, not like that

MJK: You don't, why not?

Blake: Cos we already know it

(all laugh)

Blake: I do anyway

MJK: Well, that doesn't mean you can't talk about it does it?

Blake: True, true

MJK: So why is it that you don't talk about relationships and sex?

Blake: Not the thing boys do

Andrew: Not the things boys do

Here, Blake offers two reasons for the absence of such discussion among boys; they 'know it already' and it is 'not the thing boys do'. Andrew's reiteration of this point underlines how the boys invest in a masculine identity premised on assumed knowledge and the concealment of vulnerabilities. Here, denial and effacement can be seen as necessary repetitions for the presentation of a particular version of masculinity. Julian Wood (1984) and Chris Haywood (1996) note the ways in which boys' sex talk commonly manifests itself as a loud public display of sexism and

bravado. For a boy, to talk about sex in other ways, such as sharing a problem with other boys, seeking and giving advice, may risk being regarded as transgressive male behaviour. Blake's performance within the group as the lad who knows all about sex and says so receives social recognition from the other boys in the form of shared laughter; the display of sparse words and implied sexual knowledge/action, 'we already know it', is endorsed. In this exchange Blake, Andrew and James demonstrate how sexual knowledge becomes a burden to be assumed and works with a collective desire to suppress anxieties, doubts and areas of ignorance in pursuit of an imagined masculine ideal. The discussions I conducted with girls and boys in school may suggest that sex-gender identities are played out within different cultures variously defined as 'masculine' or 'feminine' (see Thorne 1993)⁹. My argument, however, is not for the establishment and maintenance of different cultures of femininity and masculinity in school. Rather, it is that cultural products have the power to tap into social and psychic investments producing gender differentiated displays, repetitions and practices. Here, it is the meanings and associations given to teen magazines by groups of boys and girls that produce *gender displays* resonant with 'doing' gender as, simultaneously, an imaginary ideal and an everyday practice. In the examples cited, acts of readership offer a sphere for the enactment of sex-gender identities which are mediated and regulated collectively by *people-like-us*. In such moments teen magazines can be embraced or repelled, believed or doubted, discussed or censored, incorporated or othered.

⁹ Thorne's (1993) analysis points to the limitations of viewing boys and girls as occupying different cultures. This approach, she suggests, exaggerates gender differences, overlooks intra-gender variation and raises questions about whose experiences are represented in educational research.

Concluding comments

This chapter has focused on the ways in which teen magazines provide a site for learning in relation to issues of sexuality. Ethnographic evidence suggests that young people in school use popular cultural forms as a resource and framework to facilitate discussion, thought and action within the sexual domain. Young women, in particular, enjoy teen magazines and view them as cultural markers in an externally constructed developmental process demarcated by age and gender. For young women, collective reading of teen magazines offers an opportunity for dialogue through which femininities can be endlessly produced, defined and enhanced. The responses of young men, however, indicate that readership of teen magazines takes on a different gendered significance whereby boys express a reluctance to engage in regular readership or acts of collective readership and view such practices as emasculating. Hood-Williams (1997) study of comics for pre-teen boys and girls suggests that comics aimed at boys such as *Beano* prepare them for readership of the tabloid press. Hood-Williams' textual analysis of comics makes a connection between the pranks found in boys' comics and forms of sociality reported in the *Sun* newspaper. Drawing upon Lacan (1977), Hood-Williams theorises that the transition from comics to the tabloid press indicates that boys readership practices represent a shift from symbolic resistance to the Law of the Father to one in which the Law of the Father is symbolically occupied. My analysis of teenage magazines discussed in this chapter does not suggest a close relationship between textual forms and teenage boys. This leads me to consider other ways in which young men in school may be styling their masculine identities.

The relationship between reading practices and gender difference indicates that acts of readership offer a sphere for producing and conveying sex-gender identities in school. Here, peer group relations play a part in the

mediation and regulation of reading practices, where embracing magazines and repelling them can be viewed as a *gender display* intended to purvey a particular masculinity or femininity. The processes involved in the production and consolidation of school-based masculinities and femininities suggest that cultural products have the power to tap into social and psychic investments, producing gender differentiated enactments, repetitions and practices. Here, it the meanings and associations ascribed to magazines by groups of boys and girls which produce public demonstrations of doing gender. The performative expression of these displays suggest that gendered identities operate, simultaneously, as imagined ideal and everyday practice in the lives of young women and men in school (see Walkerdine (1987) and Butler (1990) for further discussion of the ways in which gender can be seen as 'performance').

The sexual content of contemporary teen magazines can be seen as part of a 'contractual understanding' (Barker 1989) between the magazine and its readership whereby readers expect to be informed and entertained by sexual issues. In acts of collective readership, young people in school negotiate and regulate sexual discourse in ways that affirm their gender identities. In such moments sexual issues can be discussed or censored, laughed with or laughed at, incorporated or othered. The energy and agency of young people in relation to issues of sexuality suggests that the protective discourse and moralising agenda mobilised by Peter Luff, M.P. may appear insignificant and superfluous to the lives of many school students. Features in *More!* magazine such as 'Sextalk' and 'real life dramas' illustrate some of the ways in which teen magazines work within the boundaries of normative discourse where prejudice and stereotyping pertaining to same-sex partnerships remain unchallenged while heterosexuality is presumed (Epstein & Johnson 1994) organised and acclaimed in pictures and text. The

discourse of sexual liberation appropriated by the 'Sextalk' feature works within clearly defined, dominant sexual categories and does not extend beyond straight sex. This has implications for the use of teen magazines as resources for sexual learning, particularly in relation to sex education programmes, where different strategies may be needed to discuss certain issues and to encourage the participation of young males.

The following chapter takes up the issues of masculinities raised in this chapter. While it is clear from this chapter that young women are shaping their feminine identities in the context of the peer group and popular culture, the ways in which young men in school shape and define masculine identities is not so apparent. Chapter 6 is based upon my discussions with young men in school and aims to explore issues of masculinities as expressed by the young men I spoke with.

CHAPTER 6

Understanding masculinities: young men, heterosexuality and embodiment

Introduction

This chapter builds upon themes introduced in the previous chapter and explores further the relationship between heterosexuality and masculinities in educational establishments. The focus of this chapter is upon the ways in which young men in school constitute and consolidate heterosexual masculine identities. The chapter draws upon interviews with young men in an all-boys secondary school (see chapter 1 for details of the school and its location), many of which were conducted as focus groups. The material drawn upon in this chapter is based upon one such discussion where the ethnicity of the boys involved was mainly African Caribbean and mixed parentage; two of the boys were white British and there was one male of south Asian descent. Chapter 8 considers some of the methodological issues raised by discussing sexual issues with young men in school. This chapter, however, is concerned with developing an analysis for understanding masculinities and suggests that school processes produce sites for the enactment of heterosexual masculinities. Furthermore, I argue that these enactments demonstrate both the normative power of heterosexuality and the fragility of sex/gender categories. In the lives of young men in school, heterosexuality is understood as a *practice* involving a set of social performances in relation to young women and other males. Among the young men I spoke with there was little understanding of heterosexuality as an institutional arrangement for the support and maintenance of a particular sex-gender order. Rather, heterosexual relations were viewed as a way of demonstrating a particular masculinity that could be utilised to command

respect and confer status on some males while devaluing others. One theme of the chapter is an exploration of issues of embodiment as expressed by the young men. In these exchanges there is an emphasis on the physicality of the body, often articulated in terms of activity and performance, where the physical sense of maleness is constantly recuperated as 'doing' heterosexuality. The following section considers ways of conceptualising issues of embodiment from the perspective of different theorists in this field. In particular the work of Foucault, Guillaumin and Connell is discussed to provide an analytic framework for the empirical material that follows.

Theorising the body

As pointed out in Chapter 3, the idea that the body is an important site for the exercise of power is located within a Foucaultian framework where the rise of capitalism can be seen to create a new domain of political life, referred to by Foucault as 'bio-power' (1976: 140). Here power is conceptualised as de-centralised and productive of social relations in commonplace encounters and exchanges. From this perspective the politics of the body plays an important part in disciplining individual bodies and regulating collective bodies such as populations or specific social groups. For Foucault the body is discursively constructed, realised in the play of power relations and specifically targeted in the domain of the sexual. Foucault sees sex as a political issue, crucial to the emergence and deployment of bio-power,

It [sex] was at the pivot of the two axes along which developed the entire political technology of life. On the one hand it was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects

of its activity (Foucault 1976: 145).

In Foucaultian theory, disciplining the body at the level of the individual has a historical trajectory that can be traced to the Christian pastoral tradition of the seventeenth century. Christian spirituality encouraged individuals to speak their desires in order to control them. The transformation of desire in religious discourse was an attempt to purify the mind and the body by expelling worldly desire and turning the subject back to God. This spiritual experience produced, for individuals, 'a physical effect of feeling in one's body the pangs of temptation and the love that resists it' (1976: 23). Foucault points to the links with the sexual libertine literature of the nineteenth century such as *My Secret Garden* and the writings of de Sade where sexual activities and erotic attachments are described and documented in episodic detail. One way of understanding this 'tell all' experience is to view it in terms of internal relations or psychic structures whereby the Other is produced within the Self. From a psychoanalytic perspective this has the effect of heightening desire by producing the 'forbidden' and, simultaneously, heightening anxiety in the constant struggle to expel the Other from within. It is possible to view the homophobia of young men in school as part of this dynamic. Similarly, the desire/repulsion expressed by girls in relation to sexual activity can also be seen as an internal dynamic, variously played out in social arenas (see Chapter 5). In these examples the desire for/fear of relationship is enacted within the peer group and plays a part in the structuring of heterosexual hierarchies in school (Kehily & Nayak 1997). In peer group interactions, individuals are active in the control and regulation of their own bodies within a broader context of institutional control and regulation.

Contemporary social theory on issues of embodiment suggest that the body

is the site upon which social categories and political principles can be played out (Bourdieu 1986; Frank 1991; Turner 1991). Turner (1991) suggests that social changes such as the growth of consumer culture, the development of postmodern themes and the feminist movement have brought the body into prominence in contemporary analyses. Postmodern perspectives suggest that the new found emphasis on issues of embodiment represents a challenge to the Enlightenment tradition in Western thought which privileges the intellect over the body. Other theorists, however, appear keen to hold onto the materiality of the body and to assert its place in class-gender systems. In Bourdieu's (1986) analysis, the body remains central to contemporary ways of conceptualising the relationship between social class and aesthetic taste as 'the most indisputable materialisation of class taste' (1986: 190). Colette Guillaumin's (1993) study suggests that 'the body is the prime indicator of sex' (1993: 40) where external reproductive organs are ascribed a set of material and symbolic meanings elaborated in the construction of sexual difference. This separation of the sexes at the level of the body is duplicated by a material social relationship involving the sociosexual division of labour and the distribution of power. Guillaumin indicates that the sexing of the body in society is a long-term project involving work at different levels: physical and mental labour; direct and indirect interventions; the exercise of gender-specific social practices and competences. Bodies are constructed in societal contexts where ways of being *in/with your body* have material effects:

Restricting one's body or extending it and amplifying it are acts of rapport with the world, a felt vision of things (Guillaumin 1993: 47).

For Guillaumin, the materiality of the body plays a part in the production of

gender inequalities which can be seen in the different ways in which boys and girls play, use space and engage in bodily contact. Central to the construction of the sexed body is, in Guillaumin's terms the 'body-for-others', ways of relating to others in terms of physical proximity, which is learned by both sexes but experienced differently. Bodily contact among males in combat and play introduces notions of solidarity, co-operation and control of public space. However, for girls the body-for-others is constructed in the private domestic sphere where the female body is both closed in on itself and freely accessible. From this perspective the materiality of the body is constitutive and productive of gender inequalities in ways that are learned, experienced and lived.

Bob Connell's (1995) study of masculinities is also concerned with the ways in which gender is understood and interpreted in relation to the body. He suggests that the physicality of the body remains central to the cultural interpretation and experience of gender. In Connell's analysis, as in Guillaumin's, the materiality of the body is important to individuals and to societal arrangements and can be seen to make a difference to the ways in which gender is learned and lived. For Connell, masculinity can be defined within a system of gender relations as,

simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture (Connell 1995: 71).

Furthermore, Connell indicates that there is a need to assert the *agency* of bodies in social processes (1995: 60) in order to understand gender politics as an embodied social politics. Connell uses the term 'body-reflexive practice'

to suggest the ways in which bodies can be seen to be located within a complex circuit as both objects and agents of social practice. In this model the body is located within a particular social order where bodily experience is productive of social relations (and socially structured bodily fantasy) which in turn can produce new bodily interactions (1995: 61-2). 'Body-reflexive practice' captures the dynamic interplay of bodily interactions working within societal and institutional constraints and also the sense of agency which suggests that experiences at the level of the body offer possibilities for transgression and change.

Bodies in school: institutions and the embodiment of masculinities

Foucault (1976) points to the ways in which schools of the eighteenth century were structured and organised to take into account the sexuality of children,

the internal discourse of the institution - the one it employed to address itself, and which circulated among those that made it function - was largely based on the assumption that this sexuality existed, that it was precocious, active and ever present (Foucault 1976: 27).

In particular, the sex of schoolboys, Foucault indicates, is constructed as a public problem in and through discursive strategies which encourage the deployment of a range of medical and educational interventions for the control of adolescent boys. In contemporary schooling pupils become the object of disciplinary regimes which aim to control and regulate the (sexed) body as well as the mind. Rules govern the physical use of spaces where pupils move - in classrooms, playground and corridors. These spaces, in their architectural design and layout, also prescribe, to some extent, the type

of movement that is possible and desirable. For example, the subject of 'classroom management' taught at teacher training colleges suggests to student teachers that the learning environment can be shaped in particular ways by the strategic placing of tables, chairs and classroom equipment. Bodies in school can be seen in two ways; collectively as a student body, to be controlled and moved about with ease; secondly as individual bodies to be, simultaneously, trained and protected. Sexuality, as Foucault points out, can be seen as a key feature which structures the ways in which bodies in school are organised and related to.

In secondary schools, through the social processes of schooling, there is an associative link made between the body and sexuality or, to put it another way, the body is seen as a conveyor of sex, and sexuality is seen as an embodied manifestation of the body/sex couplet. The body that emerges in relations of schooling is predominantly heterosexual (Rich 1980). Connell (1995) uses the concept of 'hegemonic masculinities' to discuss the relationship between different kinds of masculinity and the ways in which issues of sexuality and embodiment feature in these accounts. Within the framework of hegemonic masculinities there are specific relations of dominance and subordination played out between groups of men. In these interactions heterosexuality assumes a dominant status, while homosexuality acquires a subordinate position in the sex-gender hierarchy. This chapter is concerned to explore the ways in which heterosexuality is constituted and consolidated by young men in school. The ethnographic evidence discussed in this chapter suggests that heterosexuality is constituted in the everyday practices of young men in school. Within the educational institution these practices have the effect of consolidating and validating a particular masculinity.

Constituting heterosexuality: sex-talk, masturbation and pornography

As pointed out above, the interactions between young men in school indicate that heterosexuality can be seen as a *practice* involving a set of social performances in relation to young women and other males. Heterosexual relations were viewed by the young men as 'natural' and as a way of demonstrating a particular masculinity that could be exercised to establish a position of privilege within the male peer group. A central theme in the demonstration of an esteemed masculinity is the notion of 'knowing it already' in matters of sexuality. In conversations with young men, I asked them how they learned about sex and was frequently met with responses such as, 'I already know about it... I taught myself' (Justin), 'We already know it, I do anyway' (Blake). In these exchanges certain young men seemed keen to assert, to me and the other boys in the group, that sexual knowledge was located in the self. In these declarations Justin and Blake suggest that achieving knowledge and 'knowing' in the domain of the sexual was acquired through self-activity. Justin elaborated on his sexual learning in the following terms:

Justin: Well, my Dad, he's hinted at things, he has, yeah. He told me about, well, he never gave me much explanation like, just hints, but they came together, all things, by watching videos, magazines, listening to friends, older brother and just getting to know for myself, you know.

Here, Justin indicates that 'knowing it already' involves the active and protracted process of making sense of multiple sources. Sexual knowledge, far from being easily assumed and embodied within the masculine sense of self, is in fact learned in the piecemeal way described by young women (see Thomson & Scott 1991). However, within the male peer group, the

demonstration of competence and fear of ignorance become familiar tropes in the articulation of a masculinity that is sexually knowing and heterosexually active.

In the male peer group heterosexual activity is valorised and frequently spoken about in terms of conquest and prestige (Wood 1984). As Christian, a boy in my study put it, 'All boys claim to be doing it with girls - everyone in the school'. However, while males in school may engage in the sexual boast there is evidence to suggest that the performance is not always believed,

Christian: I listen to what they say but you can't take it seriously, you can't always believe them 'cos they might just be saying that for their mates, to look strong or to make them look bigger.

Here the physical quality of looking 'strong' and 'big' in front of your mates can be seen as a symbolic attempt to display an exaggerated and inflated masculinity, capable of achieving status in the male peer group. Young men reported speaking about sex with each other by recounting details of sexual encounters with girls in terms such as, 'I did this with her last night, then I did that'. Such interactions indicate the need to maintain a masculine style premised on activity and performance. In these moments the collective structure of the male peer group offers a performative space where heterosexuality and masculinity can be fused and displayed. This space can also be seen to provide a forum for a form of secular confessional where young men disclose details of their sexual encounters with girls.

Transforming desire into discourse, in this context, is turned into a boast which seeks recognition rather than repentance. As other researchers have

documented, sex-talk between males serves many purposes and can be seen to have a range of regulatory effects: policing the boundaries of gender-appropriate behaviour for young men and young women; providing an imaginary ideal of desirable masculinity; bolstering the reputation of particular males; concealing vulnerabilities and producing heterosexual hierarchies (Lees 1993; Wood 1984; Haywood 1996; Kehily & Nayak 1997).

The following discussion with a group young men offers further insights into the workings of male peer groups and the links made between masculinity and heterosexual activity. In the context of a conversation in which the young men are talking about heterosexual activity as routine I ask:

MJK: So, is it uncool to be a virgin?

Christian: Nah, I wouldn't say that ...

Justin: It depends, when you're younger, no, but when you get to Year 11 man

Christian: But with your friends, if you tell your friends you haven't had sex, my friends anyway, they wouldn't like act up on you, I mean, they try to encourage you to have sex, but -

Justin: My friends would be going [in low voice] go on then, go on now then, get there now, have sex, go on then

Christian: Nah, that's no good

Justin: What's no good?

Justin: It's nothing to be scared of

Matthew: But who wouldn't want to do it?

Christian: No man, there's a difference man, there's a difference between wanting to do it and people telling you to do it. Even if you want to do it from the start man, but when people start telling you to do it, it makes you like, you want to give them a challenge, makes you want to say no.

In this discussion the young men indicate that the links between masculinities and heterosexual activity are negotiated within friendship groups (cf. Epstein 1996). Sex with girls is presented as a general aim to be desired and expected, an eroticised 'getting there' for all boys. This notion of 'getting there' links into the idea of females as territory to be conquered/penetrated, a theme which is elaborated upon below. However, the reflections of Justin and Christian suggest that heterosexual activity is differently appraised. While Justin's friends would urge 'doing it' as a display of hyper-heterosexuality, Christian's friends would offer encouragement without 'acting up on you'. Christian's comments suggest that other modes of behaviour such as acting autonomously and posing a challenge may also be incorporated into the masculine repertoire and may exist as a counterpoint to heterosexual pursuit. In such a *discursive manoeuvre* Christian is able to resist pressure to engage in heterosexual activity, while still presenting a masculine sense of self which acts to maintain his reputation in the peer group. In discussions with young men it is possible to see the male peer group as significant in negotiating meanings attached to sexual activity, where versions of heterosexuality and

masculinity are produced locally. In these interactions heterosexuality is invoked as a practice; an endeavour where the 'doing' is valorised by particular styles of sex-talk. Christian counters the pressure of the male peer group by drawing upon a kind of 'outlaw' theme; the assertive male who will not be railroaded into doing what he's not ready for, suggesting that he is still capable of doing it but is too much of a man to be pushed around by other men. The discourse of challenge within the masculine repertoire, therefore, gives Christian a resource which he can utilise to present an *ultra*-masculine sense of self.

So far the discussions with young men have focused on the practice of heterosexuality in sex-talk where girls become the object of desire and the subject of a contextually constructed male sex-drive. Further discussions with young men, however, suggest that heterosexuality may be constituted in other practices *before* girls are known and spoken about. In the absence of girls, in relationships or in discourse, young men may fantasise about having sex, imagining what it will be like and how they will feel. This fantasy space is usually accompanied by bodily practices such as masturbation. Peter Willmott's (1966) study of adolescent boys in East London reports that masturbation was 'common, if not universal' (1966: 54) among males between the ages of 12-14. His study indicates that masturbation was spoken about in terms of 'discovery' or initiation into the domain of the sexual. One of Willmott's respondents spoke of masturbation in the following terms, 'I started at 14. When I first discovered it I went really mad over it. Then after a while it turned me off a bit' (1966: 54). Connell's (1995) study also suggests that masturbation plays a part in sexual learning for young males. One of Connell's respondents spoke of enjoying masturbation 'too much'; the intensity of pleasure was such that he felt compelled to stop for fear that it would prevent him from enjoying sex with a woman (1995:

104). Through masturbation young men learn about and experience sexual pleasure, however, as Connell points out, they must then discipline their bodies to be heterosexual, where desire is specifically associated with heterosex rather than with auto-eroticism or homo-eroticism.

In the conversations I conducted with young men in school, the acknowledgement that masturbation was a common practice met with routine acceptance and denial.

Christian: People have told me you go through a phase where you start, like, wanking yourself off, stuff like that. I don't think it's true because I ain't gone through that phase yet and I don't think I'm gonna

Matthew: You don't know though

Adam: You don't know that

MJK: But don't you think that's one of the ways boys learn about sex?

All: [chorusing] Yeah, yeah

Yeah man

Admit it man

MJK: You know, through finding sources that make them feel excited and-

Christian: Like the computer or something

[laughs]

Matthew: Like my mate right, he's always on the computer saying, 'Look at this' right and he gets mad excited over his computer

Adam: The internet

Justin: Consolation, that's all it is, cut all that man, how people get like - obviously they don't care about sex. I know this boy who loves porno, guy's mad about, magazines everywhere, videos. He was telling me to watch one and I says, 'No, man, I ain't watching that *dirtiness*', getting excited for no reason, it ain't worth it.

In this exchange the young men agree that masturbation forms part of their sexual learning. Furthermore, they make a link between the bodily practice of masturbating and cultural resources such as pornographic magazines, videos and internet pages. Justin appears keen to evaluate such forms of excitement for young men as dirty, worthless and second-rate. His comments draw a distinction between the 'real thing', intercourse with a woman, and any simulations of it through pornography-fuelled fantasy. Justin's dominance in this discussion indicates that there is a need to recuperate sex as heterosexual and penetrative, a move that can reclaim heterosexuality as part of a masculine identity. Rachel Thomson's (1997) analysis of young men's accounts of pornography postulates that encounters with pornographic material is 'one of the ways in which young men are brought into identification with a collective masculinity' (1997: 2). In

recounting their engagement with pornographic material, Thomson documents the ways in which individual young men attempt to evade agency by asserting that the magazine/video was obtained or initiated by a friend or a group of mates, or something they just happen to stumble across. Significantly, both Justin and Matthew claim to have a mate who is into porn, while placing their own interests in and access to, such material at a distance.

Thomson suggests that for young men, 'there is something potentially disempowering or emasculating about porn' (1997: 10) as it involves the practice of seeking sex without being desired. Justin's insistence that pornography is 'consolation', a poor substitute for sex with a women, can be seen as an vindication of Thomson's point. Negotiations with pornography can be viewed as a way of policing the boundaries of acceptable masculinity where sexual pleasure is evaluated in hegemonic terms as male-female intercourse. The recourse to such a hegemonic structure can be seen to have disciplinary effects in the dynamics of masculine hierarchies.

Christian: I've never bought one, I've found one before, I've had a look, yeah, but that's all, I've never bought one.

[background jokes about Christian and porn]

Justin: This friend of mine, right, he's got loads (of porn magazines) and I've looked at them, nasty man, horrible. All them pictures man. I say put them away, they don't teach you nothing. He might get excited, but me, not exciting or nothing. People who do that, man, they're sad.

Christian: They're sad, very sad.

MJK: (To Justin) And does he [your friend] have a girlfriend?

Justin: Yeah, he's got a girlfriend, got a nice little woman. I wish I'd seen her, I'd have liked her for myself. But them videos an' stuff are nasty, man, they should ban them videos.

Christian: Some people enjoy them though.

Justin: Yeah, but if a man watches them and they get all excited and then they turn it off and they can't get no ladies, that's why they rape.

Christian: Can't get no ladies that's why men rape.

This discussion between Justin and Christian illustrates some of the ways in which young men negotiate and evaluate masculinities in relation to issues of sexuality. Investments in pornography are viewed as a bad thing. While it is barely acceptable to engage with pornographic material, it is totally unacceptable to buy it for oneself. In Justin's terms, coveting your friend's girlfriend is acceptable; sharing his sexually stimulating literature isn't. Men who use porn are defined as 'sad' and having an attractive girlfriend, it seems, does nothing to redeem them. Justin and Christian mobilise a moral discourse to underline their view that porn is bad and *dangerous*. They suggest that there is a causal relationship between pornography and rape. Men who use porn need women as an outlet for their sexual urges and if they can't get a woman they rape. Furthermore, the young men indicate that this moralism works in tandem with the male sex drive discourse identified

by Hollway (1989) which postulates that once the male urge for sex has been set in motion the sexual act must be completed. In male peer groups young men shape the parameters of acceptable and unacceptable sexual practice. Through such interactions young men implicitly produce definitions of desire and deviance that can be utilised as a technique for displaying certain versions of masculinity and deriding others.

Consolidating heterosexuality: relationships with women

Through engagements with sex-talk, masturbation and pornography, young men *constitute* a version of heterosexuality that is associated with a desirable masculinity. This heterosexual-masculine combination is negotiated collectively by young men in peer group interactions and may be reconfigured in different ways. Further discussions with this group of young men suggest that it is in relationships with women that heterosexuality is actively learned and *consolidated*. In the following discussion they were critical of the sex education they had received at school and claimed that they learned through experience:

MJK: Would you have liked to have had a proper sex education?

Justin: Not now, it don't make no difference to me

MJK: Why's that?

Justin: Umm, because, I taught myself

MJK: So how did you teach yourself?

[muted laughter]

Justin: By getting a girlfriend

Christian: And you explore her

[mumbling from boys in the group]

Justin: Yeah, explore her and talk to her and learn about each other and you find out about each other, you teach yourself. I can hear people, I dunno man, I think they need a couple of lessons, think they need a couple of lessons.

Justin indicates that 'getting a girlfriend' makes sexual learning possible. Learning from girls, in the context of heterosexual relations, gives young men access to knowledge that is highly prized and based on a 'doing' that enhances masculine identities. Talking to girls and having sex with them consolidates a privileged version of heterosexual masculinity. Here, females are spoken about in terms of landscape; as strange uncharted territory that can be 'explored' and known. Seeking relationships with women in these terms turns sexual learning into a form of territorial conquest which can be incorporated into the masculine repertoire. In this configuration, sexual knowledge is acquired through 'doing' and 'doing' gives young men status which makes them *feel* powerful. This sense of male power and agency in the domain of the sexual has been conceptualised from a feminist perspective as the power to control women. In this context, however, while controlling women may be implicit, Justin uses power/knowledge as a way of controlling other young men. His response to the undercurrent of boys' whispers and laughter implies that experience gained through sexual

relationships with women gives young men confidence in the male peer group and the ability to put down others.

This consolidation of heterosexual masculinities can be seen in Connell's terms as 'body-reflexive practice'; a circuit through which lived experience interacts with societal structures. The recognition accorded to masculine heterosexual activity may imply that there is a comfortable relationship between dominant masculinities and male bodily experience. Young men in school occupy physical space with ease and vie for symbolic space in competitive displays aimed at 'looking big' (see Gordon, Holland & Lahelma 1996 and Gordon et al. [in press], for a discussion of 'space' in schools). However, as Connell points out, 'body-reflexive practice' is not necessarily coherent and may involve contradictions (1995: 61). Many of the young men I spoke with expressed ambivalence in relation to bodily experience, often characterised by expressions of disgust and abjection.

Justin: I like my girl to give me blow jobs, from where I am right, and if I'm tired, very satisfying

Christian: Yeah but you wouldn't want to go with a girl after, you wouldn't want to kiss her -

Justin: Too right! If a girl gave me a blow job there ain't *no way* her lips are going near my lips, *no way, no way*.

MJK: You seem to find men's bodies disgusting.

Adam: D'you know, they are really.

Justin: Yeah man, if you touch a woman, like, you stroke her legs like [*demonstrating*] it's all smooth, she's got curves, she feel good, but men - all hairy and smelly.

Christian: Men are nasty man! They like this (*demonstrating*) all square and ugh! Women are nice and rounded and [*nuzzles his nose*] you know.

Justin: Umm, yeah, they got big bums.

In this discussion the idealisation of women's bodies is juxtaposed with the physical repugnance expressed towards male bodies. While women are constructed as 'smooth', 'rounded' and 'nice', men become 'hairy', 'smelly' and 'nasty'. The demarcation of difference in gendered bodies, activated through the senses, indicates some of the ways in which young men negotiate a path between Self and Other. In bodily encounters with young women, males create a binary that exists, literally, at the level of the skin through sight, touch and smell. Women's bodies are fetishised as comfortably curvaceous and whole; a nose-twitchingly 'nice' place to nestle. Establishing heterosexual masculinity through bodily difference can be understood as a social dynamic in which school-based peer group cultures interplay with already existing psychic dynamics (Redman 1998). In psychoanalytic terms, the fetishisation of women's bodies by young males can be variously interpreted as: producing masculinity through the Other of femininity; a 're-finding' of infant pleasures in maternal acts such as breast-feeding (Freud 1977); a search for recognition of phallic possession through the Other who 'lacks' the phallus (Lacan 1977).

The description of male bodies as 'smelly' and 'nasty' suggests that the

invocation of olfactory experiences and metaphors is one of the ways in which young people register disgust. Anthony Synnott's (1993) study of the body in society points to the ways in which odour constructs reality and mediates social interaction:

Odour contributes not only to the moral construction of the self but also to the moral construction of the *group*. Smell is not simply an individual emission and a moral statement, it is also a social attribute, real or imagined (Synnott 1993: 194, italics as original).

For these young men, smelly male bodies become the object of strong rejection as well as the subject of abject preoccupation (Bubandt 1998). Male bodies are so physically disgusting that the pleasure of oral sex also carries the fear of contamination. Justin and Christian agree that, after oral sex, kissing must be prohibited for fear of contagion. Stevi Jackson (1982) has commented on the ways in which kissing, in Western cultures, assumes symbolic significance as a marker of sexual attraction and intimacy, frequently used to define boundaries in sexual encounter. In the folklore associated with prostitution, and reproduced in the movie *Pretty Woman* (dir. Garry Marshall, 1990) kissing is excluded from the sexual repertoire of prostitute-client encounters and viewed as a sign of intimacy that is 'real' and cannot be manufactured, marketed or faked. In refusing to be kissed after oral sex, young men can be seen to deny sexual intimacy while engaging in it. To explore this dynamic further I draw upon the work of Julia Kristeva and particularly her insights into the notion of 'abjection'.

Kristeva (1982) defines the concept of 'abjection' as the process through which one expels part of one's own self as a condition for the formation of

the human subject. Kristeva suggests that the infant's experiences of its body and that of its mother, often infused with bodily fluids of blood and excrement, produce an irrational sense of disgust. During the castration complex this feeling of repulsion becomes linked with the feminine and can be expressed in the conscious world as discrimination and fear of marginal groups such as Jews in Nazi Germany. In Kristeva's (1982) analysis, abjection plays a part in constructing and maintaining a coherent identity; for the human subject to remain what it is, the 'abject' has to be 'expelled' from within the self as the unspeakable other. The return of the abject, Kristeva suggests, provides for a moment of rupture in the identity of the subject. Other theorists (Burgin 1990; Modleski 1991) have pointed to the links between Kristeva's treatment of abjection and Theweleit's (1987) study of the fantasies of German soldiers of the Freikorps whose fear of engulfment by the feminine is expressed through images of the feminine as *liquid*. Applying these ideas to the comments of the young men I spoke with it is possible to suggest that through engaging in oral sex with women, young men attempt to consolidate an identity within a dominant framework of heterosexual masculinity. The bodily experience of having oral sex involves the expulsion of part of the masculine self in sweat and ejaculatory fluid. To maintain a sense of self as heterosexual, masculine and whole, young men endeavour to prevent the return of the rejected party through kissing. Young men's treatment of their bodies in terms of the abject suggests that becoming 'proper' men involves bodily experience that is, simultaneously, pleasurable and risky. 'Coming,' in sexual terms, gives shape to a particular version of masculine selfhood but the very act also threatens to disrupt the identity it consolidates. The analysis of sex-talk provided here suggests that through active engagement in sexual practices and bodily experience young men negotiate a perilous course between Self and Other. The social and psychic dynamics involved in the enactment of

heterosexual masculinities are marked by embodied struggles which promise both the pleasure of achievement and the threat of disturbance. In these terms heterosexual masculinity can be seen as a fragile identity; endlessly sought in moments of climax but never fully *consolidated*.

Another way of reading the young men's expressions of disgust and abjection is to see them as articulations of inner struggles which find expression in homophobic rituals and practices. From this perspective kissing after oral sex can be associated with fear of the (homosexual) Other within the Self. In a previous study (Nayak & Kehily 1996) we have suggested that young men engage in a range of homophobic 'performances' as a technique for handling contradictions within the Self. The everyday expressions of homophobias in male peer group cultures can be understood as a central dynamic in the struggle to produce a heterosexual masculine identity. Through homophobic enactments, young men are involved in body styling forms through which a specific masculinity is performed defensively against femininity and homosexuality. These enactments serve as 'self-convincing rituals of masculinity' (Nayak & Kehily 1996: 225) which purvey the illusion of: expelling homoeroticism/homosexuality from the Self, displaying a coherent identity for self and others; consolidating heterosexual masculinities through action. If the practice of penetrative sex with women provides a template for a desirable masculinity it defines the acceptable repertoire of heterosex as well as defining and delimiting other sexual practices. The fusion of lips and penis in oral sex can be seen, from the perspective of the young men, to be at the margins of heterosexual sex and dangerously close to practices associated with gay sex. The fear of contamination in these terms can be interpreted as a fear of being put in touch with the homosexual 'other' and liking it. For oral sex to be made safe, in this reading, the expulsion of aspects of the male body must be directed at

women and *remain* there.

Masculinities and homophobias

In keeping with our earlier studies (Nayak & Kehily 1996; Kehily & Nayak 1997), I found homophobias to be a routine part of school life, particularly among male peer groups. Verbal abuse such as 'batty man', 'bum-chum' and 'poufter' combined with bodily styled expressions of fear and disgust such as the making of crucifixes and thrusting backs against the nearest wall were common, everyday activities. Young men I spoke with agreed that 'gay' and pejorative derivations were general terms of abuse which could be used for friends 'if they get on yer nerves' (Blake) and other boys who were regarded as different. Differences, in this sense, involved a diverse array of qualities and characteristics such as 'talking funny', 'walking funny', conforming to school rules and teacher expectations, being quiet, not liking sport or lacking sporting competence, wearing the wrong trainers/clothes, demonstrating abilities in/preference for arts subjects and, in one case, having blond hair. The fear of being called 'gay' in school acted as a powerful disciplinary technique for the regulation of male behaviour and embodied social practices (cf. Epstein 1997; 1998b). In the context of male peer group cultures, the inner fear of being gay and the outer fear of being called gay involved young men in performative displays of homophobias and exaggerated masculinities. In these enactments, psychic struggles and collective investments become entwined in the production of masculine identities that seek individual coherence and social recognition.

The sensitivity, for individuals and groups, surrounding issues of homosexuality was apparent in conversations I had with young men. Many young men agreed that homosexuality was 'unnatural' and, in the school located in the south east, the phrase 'God made Adam and Eve, not Adam

and Steve' was much repeated. The normalising centrality of heterosexuality demarcated homosexuality as marginal and deviant; to be dealt with in terms of displacement through humour, denial and aggression. Discussion with a group of six young men produced the following response:

MJK: I was going to ask you, you know, what about gay sex?

All: I don't think we wanna get into that

Oh no!

No man!

I gotta go home now

[mass laughter]

The evasion through humour, jointly articulated by the group, is suggestive of the awareness that talking about gay sex could be potentially emasculating and risks tainting those who engage in such discussions. In another discussion young men were anxious to place homosexuality beyond the bounds of their immediate environment:

MJK: What if one of your mates told you that he was gay or he thought he might be gay?

Gareth: I'd be shocked

Ian: I would too, I'd be really shocked

Richard: Yeah

MJK: Why?

Ian: Well of all my friends, I couldn't imagine any of them being gay, *in the slightest*.

Gareth: I wouldn't expect him to say that when you're fifteen, I'd be worried.

MJK: Worried?

Ian: I would, yeah, you wouldn't want to be left alone with them for too long

Chris: Especially if you're sleeping round at your mate's!

[all laugh]

Here young men indicate that having a gay friend is unimaginable and would produce feelings of 'shock' and 'worry' for them. The shock-effect is diffused in a moment of humour which draws upon the stereotype of gay men as contagious and sexually voracious. In keeping with Mac an Ghaill (1994) I found homophobias to be articulated through class cultural formations. On occasions, after the jokes, stereotypes and denials had been proclaimed, young men may proffer a more liberal, middle-class approach to homosexuality. This could be expressed in terms of freedom of choice, 'people have a right to do what they want, it's up to them' (Christian). Or alternatively, as an enlightened tolerance based on personal contact, 'My mum knows someone who's gay, he's a good friend' (Matthew). These discussions, however, were also peppered with homophobic comments, sometimes in the same breath,

Matthew: This one guy, he's a good friend and he would never try anything because he's gay. But still in my eyes, a gay man - keep your distance - *please*, keep your distance.

Some young men I spoke with expressed the view that gay men were 'confused' about their sexuality and may have turned to men as a consequence of their lack of success with women. This resonates with the popularly held notion that homosexuality is a 'phase', an adolescent sexual experiment that most boys *grow out of* in due course.

Attempting to discuss homosexuality in dispassionate ways involved young men in elaborate verbal contortions:

Gareth: I suppose it's different if you know the person before they tell you that they're gay

Ian: Yeah

Gareth: 'Cos it changes your view of them

Ian: Yeah, if you're getting to know someone and, like, meet them somewhere and it comes up in the first conversation that they're gay or lesbian then you wouldn't like, be prejudiced to them as you would to someone you've known for ages and they've kept it from you

Gareth: 'Cos you know what they're like, the kind of person they are

Richard: It would change the way you think about them

Ian: Yeah, whereas if you find out first of all you just know and you're always going to look at them in the same way 'cos you know what they're like.

Here, young men are involved in collective negotiations to determine the conditions under which it is acceptable to be gay or lesbian. Knowing from the start appears to be viewed more favourably than the closet strategy. The comments of the young men indicate their need to conceptualise sexuality as a fixed and determining component of identity. This points to the double-bind encountered by gay and lesbian youth in social structures where there is little space to develop sexual identities and the ever present danger that coming out will 'change' the way others think about you (Alyson 1980; Trenchard & Warren 1984). Vehemently aggressive expressions of homophobia were most frequently articulated by young men who identified as working class, and claimed to be non-conformist and disaffected by the school environment. Physical aggression and threats of violence such as 'If anyone called me gay I'd punch them' (Blake) and 'No-one calls me that and gets away with it - he'd know about it that's all' were common responses to homophobic abuse. The link between homophobia and violence can be seen in the following discussion of a television chat-show:

Christian: There was this thing in America about that gay man who had a best friend. He came on a talk show and he said, 'Oh I love you, I loved you all down the years'.

Adam: He got killed

Christian: And his mate turned round and shot him

Justin: What?

Matthew: Yeah, this man, he had a best friend, he came on a talk show, you know, Ricki Lake, and that and he said to this other guy 'I love you' and that, 'I really love you' and all that and 'I wanna be with you' and a couple of weeks later he shot him

Justin: The man who wasn't gay shot the other man?

Christian & Adam: Yeah, yeah

Justin: Well done, congratulations! That's took a lot of pressure off your mother, trust me, love it.

[laughter]

This discussion of the Ricki Lake programme¹⁰ is illustrative of a particularly dramatic style of homophobia where the oppressive dynamics are forged through severe acts of 'queer-bashing'. Justin's reaction to the incident and the ensuing laughter suggests that, for these young men, homosexuality can be most injurious when it involves your best friend. Homosocial bonds forged in male friendship must be stringently policed to guard against erotic attachment where transgressions seemingly justify

¹⁰ I am grateful to Debbie Epstein for pointing out that this incident in fact occurred on the Jenny Jones programme, not Ricki Lake.

extreme measures. The young men I spoke with illustrate the ways in which expressions of homophobias in school are widespread, diverse and nuanced by class cultural configurations. Invariably homophobic expressions involve verbal pronouncements and bodily displays which are infused with fear and denial. Homosexuality is to be *most* feared and punished when it is close to home, in the immediate environment of the school, best friend or the Self. These displays can be seen as public acts, for self and others, in the endless struggle to produce a coherent heterosexual masculinity. For many of the young men who engage in these oppressive actions, homophobias provide a fantasy of masculinity which can be sustained through repetition of embodied displays. The humour, denials and aggression can be understood as styles utilised by young men to fashion an identity which can never be fully achieved. The homophobic practices of young men reveal some of the psychic struggles and social dynamics which construct the masculine ideal as both compelling and flawed.

While issues of homophobia aroused highly charged emotions among young males, attitudes to lesbianism could be discussed in more considered ways. As Steven expressed it, 'I don't know why but I find it easier to accept girls being lesbian than blokes being gay, I don't know why'. The apparently inexplicable acceptability of lesbianism can be seen within the context of male peer group cultures and the ways in which sexuality is invoked. The following discussion, in which the young men I spoke with make it clear that homosexuality is 'not OK', I venture to ask them about lesbianism:

MJK: What about lesbianism, is that OK then?

All: I reckon it's OK

Yeah, yeah, it's OK

Give it to me!

Love it!

Deng: No lesbians is not OK. Girls is OK.

Christian: The thing is, it seems alright to us, yeah, because we're men ain't it?

Matthew: But think about it, would you like your mother to be lesbian or your sister?

Justin: I wouldn't like that, not my mum, with my sister I feel like whatever makes her happy, at the end of the day I don't wanna upset my sister, I want her to be happy so if it makes her happy, she wants to be a lesbian, fair enough, it doesn't bother me whether she's gay or not.

While there is a general climate of homophobia in male peer groups, the idea of girls-doing-sex can be seen as a fantasy space in the male psyche for sexual excitement and pleasure. Lesbianism as titillating novelty, voiced in phrases such as 'give it to me', 'love it' and 'because we're men' serve to enhance displays of heterosexual masculinity in the competitive sphere of the male peer group. The limited acceptability of lesbianism can be interpreted as an assimilation of lesbian sex as erotic turn-on which, unlike male same-sex encounters, does not threaten to disrupt heterosexual masculine identities. As Skeggs (1997) points out lesbianism is, of course, commodified for men's pleasure in pornographic literature and tabloid newspapers such as *Sunday Sport*. In this respect the responses of the young men I spoke with may also be mediated by popular cultural texts. However,

when the conversation moves from lesbianism in the abstract to the particularities of lesbians as family members there is a perceptible shift in attitude. Deng reminds the group of the collectively held homophobic framework in his assertion that 'girls is OK' not lesbians and Matthew follows up the reference point with the challenge, 'would you like your mother to be lesbian or your sister?' Like your best friend coming out as gay, Justin indicates that a lesbian mother is undesirable and too close for comfort. Attitudes to lesbianism as articulated by the young men I spoke can be seen as a more fluid form of homophobia which creates space for sexual stimulation while simultaneously regulating erotic attachments within the family.

Fear of engulfment - fear of female sexuality

In descriptions of sexual encounters with girls, as discussed earlier, young men tended to idealise female bodies and denigrate male bodies. I was interested in exploring the implications of this for gender relations. Does the idealisation of women's bodies suggest that girls are held in high esteem in intimate personal relationships or does it offer a counter indication that females are objectified in ways that may be sexually opportunistic and exploitative? Or, maybe, sexual relationships for young men involve a complex interplay of the exemplary and other, more measured feelings? At certain moments young men discuss male-female relationships in terms of disdain and fear.

Justin: I was going out with this girl, man, and I was going out with her for *tooo long*, man, and my mum like her, she used to cook dinner for her and let her sleep the night and she used to take her shopping and everything. I didn't like it at all. I wanted to get out of there man (laughs).

MJK: How come you went off her?

Justin: I dunno, I just did, things must have changed. But my mum still likes her. She keep telling me phone her. I ain't gonna phone her.

In this discussion Justin asserts that some relationships can go on for 'too long'; beyond the point where heterosexual masculinities are enhanced and enriched. The line between feeling comfortable in a relationship and wanting to 'get out' of it is difficult to identify but can be linked to certain 'changes' in everyday social practice. The female friendship that evolved between his mother and his girlfriend and their engagement in commonplace routines of shopping and cooking lead Justin to feel entrapped by the doubly defining sphere of domesticity and femininity. Justin's expressed wish, 'I wanted to get out of there man' is suggestive of his felt need to escape the claustrophobic, womb-like world of domestic femininity and, simultaneously, his fear of engulfment by this space (Theweleit 1987). In these moments relationships with young women involve the enactment of inner dramas in the masculine psyche.

At other moments young men I spoke with discussed female sexuality as moving beyond the domestic sphere to become rampant and insatiable,

Christian: I was watching this programme right, *The Girlie Show*

Justin: I watch that

Christian: And there was this thing 'bout some Chinese lady, she got gang-banged by about, she got gang-banged eleven hours by a hundred and twenty men

Justin: I saw that

Christian: Did you see that one?

Justin: She was loving it

Christian: She was loving it. It was dead cool, well cool!

(all laugh)

Christian: She was going, 'Oh it's alright to get gang-banged, oh it's perfectly alright'.

Matthew: It wasn't gang-banged. She was laying there in the studio and 'nough men were just like -

Justin: I bet if you were watching it

Matthew: No it was -

Adam: It was for the world record weren't it? Setting the world record.

Christian: It was yeah. It was about a hundred and twenty men

Justin: I wouldn't like to bun her, no way!

Christian: And she got all these men, all these big tugga fat men with all spots and it was like, one of them - why are there so many ugly men? Everyone else can have it good then, ain't it -

Channel 4's *The Girlie Show* forms part of a contemporary genre in television programming which became known as 'Yoof TV' in a parodic acknowledgement of Janet Street-Porter's pioneering style and south London accent. Aimed specifically at the 18-25 age group, programmes such as *Network 7*, *The Word*, *Don't Forget Your Toothbrush* and *TFI Friday* can be seen as examples of the genre, characterised by the formulaic blend of young presenters and chaotic camera work providing a hectic mix of interviews, live music and features. The development of the genre, from its early 80s inception in *Network 7* to the late 90s incarnation *Girlie Show*, placed increasing emphasis on features which encouraged displays of excess, outrage and ritualistic humiliation. A regular feature of *The Word* was the 'I'd do anything to get on the box' challenge, where self-nominated members of the public engaged in televised tasks such as eating excrement/vomit and covering themselves in leeches/maggots/spiders. Such televisual moments can be seen as a playful inversion of game-shows, designed to fascinate and repel a young audience on their return from the pub/club. *The Girlie Show* continued the tradition of over-the-top, 'in yer face' features popularised by *The Word*, with the additional inflection of new feminine subjectivities. Amid the high profile of 'girl power'¹¹, *The Girlie Show* can be seen as a

¹¹ Epitomised by the success of the *Spice Girls* and other all-girl bands such as *All Saints* and *Cleopatra*.

moment of media-propelled mockery and subversion in which gender relations are *played with* and *played up*, rather than transgressed.

The boys' comments on *The Girlie Show* indicate that they are viewing 'new-style' television programming within the framework of 'old-style' gender relations. Rather than seeing the feature as an ironic comment on femininities and sexuality, the young men interpret it in largely 'straight' terms. Details of the sexual feat are regarded, by the young men, as remarkable, worth recalling and embellished with reference to the woman's 'Chinese' appearance and the men's bodily girth. In the discussion young men work to establish the important points: not a gang-bang but a world record; how many men over how many hours and, finally, what they think about it. For a woman to have sex with a hundred and twenty men over eleven hours is both amazing, 'well cool!', and a sexual turn-off, 'I wouldn't like to bun her, no way!' Women who 'love' sex and make it clear that they love sex with different men are admired, but their sexual availability/activity turns them into the *kind of women* who become undesirable. Female sexuality, in this form, becomes an object of fascination, fear and repulsion. The recourse to traditional ways of evaluating women in terms of the sexual dichotomy of virgin/whore (Griffin 1982) suggests that the media-constructed combination of new feminine subjectivities and postmodern aesthetics have made little impact on the sex-talk of this male peer group.

Heterosexual activity and reputation

Among the young men I spoke with there was an awareness of differences between males and females which were played out in the domain of the sexual. These differences involved young men in the taking up of evaluative moral positions in relation to sexual attitudes, behaviour and reputation.

The asymmetrical power relations inscribed in these practices were frequently regarded as routine and natural by young men in school

Christian: In the whole world there's a difference between men and ladies. Men are always allowed to do more than ladies.

Ali: True, true

Here, Christian suggests that the greater freedom enjoyed by men at the expense of women is a universal principle that cannot be disputed or changed. In these terms male privilege and female containment is assumed. The sexual appraisal of young women through notions of 'reputation' has been well documented (see Chapters 4 & 5). Through the use of regulatory categories such as 'slag'/'drag' (Cowie & Lees 1987) young men are active in defining and policing the sexual behaviour of young women while denying agency in claims of a gender-specific world order. In the following discussion young men speculate on the different approaches to sexual activity and reputation taken up by males and females:

Christian: You know miss, like, if you have sex and that, a boy will admit to it but a girl will never admit to something

MJK: Umm, Why is that?

Christian: I dunno

Justin: Some girls think sex is nasty

Christian: You know the thing is, yeah, men can never be

called slushers can they?

Justin: Why can't they be called slushers? I've been called a slusher

Christian: But if a woman goes with two men she gets called it

Justin: There's a difference between, right, a woman who loves sex and a woman who goes with every man. See a woman can love sex and have sex with one man a hundred times in a day and that woman's no slusher but if she has sex with a hundred men then she's a slusher. Think about it.

Christian: I know but a woman gets called a slusher if she goes off with a man and has sex after an hour, but if you think about it -

Justin: An hour's quite long!

(laughs)

Christian: I know, if you think about it, you're letting her have sex with you after an hour, there's no difference, d'you know what I'm saying?

Justin: I know what you're saying but I been called a slusher as well

Christian: And what did you say 'bout that?

Justin: I'm quite happy. I'm quite proud of it.

In this exchange Justin and Christian consider the implications of sexual activity for males and females. The reluctance of young women to 'admit' to sexual encounters is noted by Christian and directly linked with notions of reputation, particularly the acquisition of the label 'slusher'. In the schools where I conducted research casual sex was viewed negatively as something to be avoided by males and females alike. I observed intra-gender conversations where boy's sexual behaviour was subject to evaluative endorsements in similar terms to girl's, often using the same words. In both schools where I carried out fieldwork there were certain young men who had acquired a reputation among pupils for sexual 'looseness'. The dispute between Justin and Christian over whether males can be called 'slusher' or not is illustrative of this tendency. However, whereas Justin is 'happy' and 'proud' to be called a 'slusher', I did not encounter any girls who were pleased to be associated with the term. This suggests that the notion of sexual reputation, though generally applied, takes on a more fixed and potentially damaging quality for young women while remaining more fluid and potentially positive for young men (Holland et al 1990; 1998; see Bland 1995 & Mort 1987 for a historical treatment of these themes).

Justin makes a further, closely worked distinction in the use of the term 'slusher'; between 'a woman who loves sex and a woman who goes with every man'. Young women make a similar distinction between girls who are romantically involved and committed to a man and those who 'sleep around' (Griffin 1985; Lees 1986; 1993). This indicates that it is not sexual activity *in itself* that carries the stigma of indecent and inappropriate behaviour but the social context of the actions. Slusher, slag, slapper and

other such terms can be seen as socially ascribed categories, taking their cues from culturally coded approaches to gender and sexuality. However, as Christian astutely observes, the difference between personal sexual practices and those of so called slushers is often negligible. This suggests that the continual negotiations of the male peer group are not only about regulating young women but also serve to create boundaries and distinctions *between* men. The competitive culture of male peer groups, seen in moments of humour and hostility, is played out in the domain of sexuality. In these encounters, individual fears and anxieties relating to female sexuality are interwoven with the need to perform and maintain status within the male peer group.

Masculinities and 'race'

So far we have observed the ways in which sexuality provides a sphere for the negotiation and demonstration of heterosexual masculinities. In the everyday social interactions of male peer groups, young men *constitute* a desirable identity through embodied styles of sex-talk and homophobic display. Sexual activity with women and the subsequent male boast can be seen as an attempt to *consolidate* a particular version of heterosexual masculinity that seeks personal affirmation and social recognition. In male peer group encounters, young men negotiate and establish heterosexual hierarchies by defining themselves *as against* women, gays and other subordinate identities. The invocation of 'race' and racial categories in discussions of sexuality can be seen as a way of creating further intra-gender distinctions within male peer group cultures. In the following discussion Ali, a Muslim male, is cross-examined about the sexual practices of Asians:

Christian: You can't have sex until you're married can you?

Ali: Why's that?

Christian: You, your religion, can't have sex can you?

Ali: If it's not allowed I wouldn't be here would I?

Christian: No, *before* you're married. D'you have to be married before you can have sex with her?

Ali: You can have sex with anyone, just like, it doesn't come into it what's allowed, whether you're supposed to or not, people do.

Matthew: But you get, like, arranged marriage?

Ali: No, some people do, it just depends

Christian: If you think about it Ali yeah, just saying, you might not but just saying you had an ! arranged marriage, yeah, how d'you feel, how d'you feel having sex with your new wife to be without knowing her.

Ali: I wouldn't do it

Christian: You wouldn't do it at all?

Ali: I wouldn't marry her

Christian: No, I'm just saying, what about if?

Ali: I just wouldn't alright.

Justin: Exactly, right, you wouldn't go through with it, it's just like she's been put there to make children right.

The interrogative style adopted to question Ali suggests that his masculinity is being appraised as well as his racial identity. Other researchers (Mac an Ghaill 1994; Nayak 1997; Sewell 1997) have commented on the ways in which Asian males are feminised as weak and ineffectual by other young males and placed in a subordinate relation to the perceived strength and dynamism ascribed to African Caribbean masculinity. In the exchange involving Ali, young men operate with an *already constructed* notion of Asian culture as Other, marked by restriction for men and oppression for women. The persistent questions concerning sex before marriage and arranged marriage indicate some of the ways in which racial identities are projected onto ethnic subjects. The collectively held view that Asian males are deprived of agency in the sexual domain produces a style of questioning that positions Ali as 'victim' of strange sexual customs. For these young men the racial identity of 'Asian' is intimately bound up with the imposition of alien and unfathomable cultural practices. The race/culture couplet drawn upon in this encounter serves to ground racial stereotypes in fictions of Otherness that can be located and fixed within 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983). For Christian, the most unfamiliar aspect of Asian culture becomes the projected encounter of finding yourself in bed on your wedding night, having sex with a woman you do not know. In other circumstances having sex with a woman you do not know is regarded as sexually enterprising, an achievement of masculine drive and endeavour referred to by young men as 'pulling power'. However, viewed through the lens of cultural Otherness,

Asian masculinity is seen as sexually disempowered and, ultimately, emasculated.

At a later point in the discussion Ali attempts to explain that there is diversity and difference within Asian communities, reflected in marital practices. His comments are not well received and often curtailed by others in the group in an exchange which illustrates the links between sexuality and 'race':

Deng: Would you go out with an Indian?

[... muted laughter]

Christian: I'm not being racist or nothing. Listen, listen, there's a reason why I wouldn't, the reason why I wouldn't is, yeah, 'cos mostly they're Muslim and first of all that couldn't really happen

Justin: True, true

Ali: How's that? My uncle got married to a Catholic girl.

Christian: But what I'm saying is yeah, you're trying to tell me that our aunt is white yeah, but if an English man wanted to marry your other aunt, right, would your family be having it, and he wasn't Muslim, would they be having it?

Ali: It depends, right, they wouldn't -

Christian: Exactly, exactly, see what I mean, if she was that nice

Ali: But like there are some in our family and they're Kenyans right, you know they're Asians in Kenyan right, well, every person in the family was married to a white person or a black person and not a Muslim.

Christian: But I'm not talking 'bout that, what I'm saying is yeah, the reason why I wouldn't, if she was that nice and she wasn't allowed, she didn't have to wear that thing round her head and she didn't have to go to the mosque five times a day, then, yeah, I probably would.

Matthew: Is that how many times you have to go to the mosque?

Ali: No.

Christian: It is, it's five times a day.

Ali: The only time I go to the mosque is when -

Christian: [to Ali] Not you, not you man, properly, if you're a proper Muslim, proper like the leader of the mosque, five times a day.

Ali: Yeah the leader of the mosque.

In this discussion issues of 'race' are spoken through sexuality and couched in the leading question, 'would you go out with an Indian?' Going out with someone involves acting upon sexual attraction which bespeaks the desire for inter-personal intimacy that is both bodily and emotional. Who you would go out with, in these terms, says something about *you*; what kind of person you are and where you draw the line in matters of sexual desire and bodily boundaries. Christian is keen to point out that his reluctance to go out with an Indian girl is not racism but a form of cultural commonsense, based on notions of difference and compatibility. As Barker (1991) points out, this configuration can be seen as an example of 'new racism'; a contemporary style which elides charges of discrimination by placing emphasis on similarities/differences between cultural groups. In this case the deployment of new racism involves a particularly repressive image of Islam and the practices of 'proper' Muslims. For Christian to go out with a Muslim girl she would have to dispense with all the signifying practices of Islamic culture: family restrictions, wearing a veil, going to the mosque. In other words she would have to become deculturalised. In the following discussion young men elaborate further on mixed relationships:

Deng: Would it matter what nationality your wife would be when you're older?

Christian: No why? United nations ain't it? [laughs]

Justin: When you get home what d'you like?

[laughter]

Deng: No, Matthew, what d'you say about mixed

relationships? Matthew though, serious now, what d'you think? I swear I ask you before and you said you don't encourage it.

Matthew: No, that was Sulliman, that was Sulliman man.

Deng: No, listen yeah, would you like to get married or have a relationship with your own kind as it was? D'you prefer, yeah, black girls or white girls Matthew?

Matthew: Both

Deng: Nah, tell the truth

Matthew: Both man

Justin: He tell the truth, he say both ain't it.

Deng [to Christian]: What about you?

Christian: I like half caste girls

Justin: I don't mind, I'm half black and I'm half white so it don't matter to me.

In this discussion imaginary others are brought home in reflections on sexual partners. The initial idea, posed by Christian and Justin is of sexual relationships as a site of racial fusion, a 'united nations' melting pot where sexual desire is not constrained by ethnic boundaries ('when you get home

what d'you like'). However, this is followed by verbal jousting which fragments the myth that anything goes. While the discourse of multiculturalism assumes that mixed relationships are fine, the commonsense culturalism drawn upon by the young men suggests otherwise. Deng's questioning of Matthew indicates that the notion of ethnic matching in sexual relationships is a powerful dynamic that deserves 'serious' consideration. The encounter is marked by the tension of two competing discourses which cannot be fully elaborated; a compelling mode of multiculturalism which endorses mixed relationships and the logic of cultural heritage which says have relationships with 'your own kind'. In such interactions issues of 'race' are articulated through sexuality and become a testing ground for racially located masculine identities.

In the following conversation the concept of sexual attraction is utilised to create *further* distinctions between males and females:

Justin: I know this Asian girl, she's *niceee*, I'd go out with her but I'm not into all that religion stuff... I'm not fussy, I'm not racist or prejudiced. Go out with a girl you like. Don't matter if she purple, green or pink.

Matthew: But would you go out with a girl who was homeless, or from a children's home?

Christian: There ain't nothing wrong with it

Matthew: What about a girl from a football team? I'm not being funny but would you?

Christian: I would go out with a girl who's homeless but from the time you lot knew about it, yeah, I'd never hear the end of it

Matthew: But if you're going out with a girl who's homeless yeah, don't you think somehow she'd be going, 'Can I stay at your house tonight?'

[laughter]

In this discussion the focus shifts from sexuality and 'race' to defining difference in other terms. In a further consideration of who you could/would go out with, young men negotiate boundaries for themselves and others. Here the bounds of acceptability extend those of 'race' and ethnicity to include girls who may be too physical, too scruffy, new-age-y, linked to movements or lifestyles outside of the mainstream. As in other moments, humour is used to regulate the real and imagined behaviour of young males.

Concluding comments:

In this chapter I have attempted to point out the links between heterosexuality and masculinity in the lives of young men in school. My analysis suggests that these links, however, are not 'natural' and remain a troubling aspect of young men's talk and behaviour in the sphere of social and sexual practices. In the sex-talk of young men in school, heterosexuality and masculinity have to be naturalised through practices which incorporate them into a particular version of masculine identity. This version which is invoked in talk and reified in action, views heterosexuality as central to a masculine sense of self which is premised on 'doing' and displaying. Bringing heterosexuality and masculinity together in this way involved

bodily practices and performances which have the effect of *constituting* a heterosexual masculine identity. The young men I spoke with suggest that heterosexuality and masculinity can be *consolidated* in bodily experience through sexual encounters with young women. Psychoanalytic insights, however, indicate that the consolidation of heterosexuality is ever partial and incomplete, a fragile structure involving psychic and social dynamics. In this respect the concept of abjection provides a useful theory to understand the expulsion of elements of the Self onto the Other in relation to both homophobic fears and fears relating to the engulfment of women. Finally, I want to pose, once again, the Labov (1972) question which asks, 'So what?' in order to evaluate both whether a tale is worth telling and the narrative performance of the teller. Why is it important to document the links between heterosexuality and masculinity? What do they tell us? My tentative conclusions at this point indicate that there may be a need for young men to shore up a dominant heterosexual masculinity beyond potentially emasculating experiences such as not knowing, incompetence, not being wanted/desired, name-calling, losing, and exposure to engulfment in the form of domestic femininity or sexually voracious women.

So far this thesis has been concerned to explore issues of gender and sexuality amongst the student population in the school. The focus of critical attention has been upon the informal culture of students in order to develop an understanding of *their perspectives* in relation to the domain of the sexual. However, I feel it is important to recognise that the pupil sexual cultures identified in this chapter and in the previous chapter are shaped in relation to other cultures in the school. This chapter indicates that women and other boys provide categories of sexual otherness for the young men with whom I conducted research. However, as Chapters 3 and 4 illustrate, the collective negotiation of pupil sexual cultures is frequently shaped in relation to

teachers in the school. Teachers can provide the absent centre of pupil cultures, the structuring presence/absence through which students define themselves as learners and as sexual subjects within the school. In some contexts teachers provide a point of identification for students who view the teacher as 'like me' or 'like I want to be'. In other contexts students draw upon oppositional strategies to define their identities *as against* teachers. It is for this reason that the following chapter shifts focus from pupil cultures to teachers. The aim of the next chapter is to develop an account of the ways in which teachers think about and relate to issues of sexuality and to look at the implications of this for teaching and learning, especially in the area of PSE and sex education.

CHAPTER 7

Sexing the subject: teachers, pedagogies and sex education

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the experiences of teachers and the ways in which pedagogic strategies and school processes are productive of sexual identities in educational arenas. A central theme of the chapter is an exploration of the relationship between the 'micro politics of schooling' (Ball 1987) and expressions of sexuality among teachers and pupils in the school. A life-history approach is used in interviews with teachers as a way of gaining access to auto/biographical accounts of individuals as (formerly) pupils and (presently) pedagogues. The chapter suggests that teacher's biographies and personal experiences play a significant part in shaping and giving meaning to the pedagogic styles they adopt. Approaches to sexualities in school and, particularly, the teaching of sex education can be seen to be informed by this dynamic. The chapter outlines three ways of looking at and studying teachers' work and culture: teachers and the labour process; life-history approaches; relations of desire. These three ways of looking represent different and divergent routes to developing an understanding of who teachers are and what they do. They are cited here in order to place the teaching of sex education within a broader context of educational research into teachers and teaching before considering emerging features and issues involved in the practice of sex education.

Teachers and the labour process

The conceptualisation of teaching as work has been the subject of much academic research (eg. Miller 1996; Nias 1984; Ozga 1988). As Lawn and Grace (1987) point out, early educational analyses placed teachers in

relations of constraint as more or less well controlled agents working within the ideological state apparatus of schooling (Althusser 1971; Sharp & Green 1975; Bowles & Gintis 1976). More recent work in the sociology of education views teachers as central to structural and cultural relations which are constitutive of the labour process in schools (see Hargreaves & Woods 1984). Studying teachers from this perspective offers an insight into salient features of teachers' lives in school such as the sexual division of labour in teaching, notions of career and professionalism and the changing nature of teachers' work. In contemporary studies of teachers and teaching it is recognised that teachers have an occupational culture of their own which 'gives meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work' (Hargreaves 1994: 165). Andy Hargreaves (1994) suggests that the culture of teachers can be defined as a set of shared values and beliefs; an assumed way of doing things among communities of teachers. Significant to an understanding of teacher cultures is the acknowledgement that the relationship between teachers and their colleagues has an effect upon practice. As David Hargreaves (1980) indicates, the occupational culture can be viewed as

a medium through which many innovations and reforms must pass; yet in that passage they frequently become shaped, transformed or resisted in many ways that were unintended or unanticipated (Hargreaves, D. 1980: 126).

In this respect teachers' culture can be seen to mediate educational policy and the curriculum of the school. However, the culture of teachers is by no means coherent. In his (1980) study David Hargreaves suggests that the occupational culture of teachers is ordered around three themes: status, competence and social relationships. Teachers in the late 70s, according to Hargreaves, were commonly concerned with broad issues such as their

standing in society and matters of respect and remuneration, as well as everyday issues such as coping with pupils and reputations among colleagues. Since the completion of Hargreaves' study the field of education has been marked by a series of educational reforms which have introduced, amongst other things, a national curriculum, local management of schools (LMS) and appraisal schemes for teachers. An overarching feature of these legislative changes is the increase in centralised control and state intervention accompanied by a decrease in autonomy at the level of the local. This shift in relations of power in the domain of education has been referred to by researchers as 'marketisation' (see Ball 1994; Epstein & Kenway 1996; Menter et al. 1997). The effects of marketisation on education can be seen in terms of the emergence of new structures and processes in the workplace. In the local context of the school, extended forms of managerialism and a decrease in the professional autonomy of classroom teachers can be seen to produce significant shifts in the nature of teachers' work and identities. The rapidly changing nature and structure of teachers' work has led Mac an Ghail (1992) to comment on the occupational culture of teachers as being in a state of crisis. Mac an Ghail (1992) postulates that teacher cultures can be located within three main ideologies: Old Collectivists, New Entrepreneurs and the Professionals. In Mac an Ghail's study teacher's identifications with or against trade unionism, new managerial practices and traditional educational values is utilised as a heuristic device to position individual teachers within analytic categories. Such typologies indicate the presence of different and competing approaches to the practice of teaching which can be seen to reflect a diverse range of political investments and personal identities.

Andy Hargreaves' (1994) study of teachers' work and culture suggests that the changes facing teachers and schools can be located within the context of

the transition from modernity to postmodernity. Hargreaves argues that schools can be seen to represent outmoded modernist institutions, failing to keep pace with the contemporary world of flexible economies, globalisation and new patterns of production and consumption. Hargreaves identifies four broad forms of teacher culture in the contemporary era: individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, balkanization. Balkanization, in Hargreaves' analysis, refers to the process whereby teachers work in small sub-groups around a specific curriculum project. These forms of occupational culture among teachers can be seen as individual and collective responses to educational change and uncertainty as experienced in particular schools. Studies of teachers occupational cultures such as those discussed above indicate that the nature of teacher's work and the ways they relate to it is dynamic and changes over time.

Life history approaches

A generative approach to the study of teachers' work and culture has been the use of life-history and auto/biographical methods in educational research (Ball & Goodson 1985; Connell 1989; Goodson & Walker 1991; Sikes & Troyna 1991). This body of literature has focused on the narrative accounts of individual teachers as a way of understanding their relationship to the labour process, pedagogic styles and issues of identity. In these studies teacher's biographies can be conceptualised as a link between the individual and social structures, capable of providing insights into the interplay between subjectivities and institutional arrangements. As illustrated in Chapter 2, auto/biographical methods offer productive possibilities for an analysis of the ways in which individuals construct and reconstruct themselves and are *constructed into* existing social relations (Stanley 1992). Personal narratives also elicit particular accounts of individuals lives which frequently have the effect of producing a coherent

identity seeking to reconcile the past within the context of the present. In Chapter 2 I used auto/biographical methods to produce an account of myself as an English teacher with an emergent interest in issues of sexuality. In this chapter I build upon and develop this approach through a recognition of the importance of biography and identity to the teachers I interviewed. Furthermore, I suggest that teacher's personal experiences have implications for the ways in which issues of sexuality are approached in the practice of sex education and in pupil-teacher relations more generally.

Maggie MacLure's (1993a; 1993b) studies of teachers' jobs and lives suggests that the notion of identity becomes an *organising principle* in the complex profile of teacher's biographies. Through identity claims teachers develop a narrative which constructs the self in relation to others. Such claims frequently involve disclaimers and moral positionings; an articulation of *what kind of teacher you are* also defines and demarcates *what you are not*. In autobiographical accounts teachers 'draw together a wide range of disparate concerns within a single argumentative structure' (MacLure 1993b: 317). In this way the identity of teacher becomes *an argument* which asserts a coherent personal stance in relation to changing or fluid issues such as the curriculum, pedagogic styles, professionalism and life-style. MacLure identified two discernible versions of identity among the teachers she interviewed: 'spoiled' identities and 'subversive' identities. Spoiled identities refer to accounts where respondents contrasted the present very unfavourably with a 'golden age' of teaching and learning in the past. In subversive accounts individuals construct the identity of teacher as dull and unadventurous and suggest that they have distanced themselves from such an identity by pursuing other (out of school) activities which bespeak the kind of person they want to be. Research into teachers' lives and work

indicates that teachers play an active part in mediating, negotiating and shaping school processes. The culture of teachers provides a forum for the construction of teacher identities and pedagogic styles. Moreover, the agency of teachers in relation to their work has a bearing on the ways in which the curriculum is conceptualised and taught as I go on to demonstrate in the following sections.

Teaching and relations of desire

The context in which teachers' work and the biographies and experiences of individual teachers become intertwined in the sphere of pedagogic practice and can be seen particularly in approaches to education which consider issues of emotional and erotic attachment. Sikes and Troyna (1991) suggest that teachers enter the profession with an imaginatively realised 'ideal model' of the kind of teacher they would like to be, based on their experiences and aspirations. I would add that the 'ideal model' can also be seen as a psychic location which, in terms of identity, can be construed as a process of *becoming*; an internalised version of self projected onto existing social relations. From this perspective, teaching is intimately bound up with desire and involves an interplay between the internal and external world of emotional investments, subjectivities and processes of social recognition (hooks 1994; Miller 1996; Robertson 1996). Here, there is an acknowledgement that teachers' desire to be liked, if not loved and adored by their students, can have a powerful effect on pedagogic practices. Jane Miller (1996) extends the teaching as desire metaphor to a discussion of pedagogy in terms of seduction. Miller's analysis considers the ways in which a beguilingly attractive sexuality inflects women's lives in the social arena of work and relationships. The work of Robertson, hooks and Miller suggests that there is a relationship between teaching and the erotic which can be seen in pedagogic approaches which are structured, in part, through

unconscious dynamics and relations of desire. These relations of desire, however, are rarely recognised by the official culture of the school. Rather, in the official context the concern is with a rational desexualisation of social encounters where the domain of the sexual, and particularly sexual knowledge, is constructed as dangerous (Britzman 1995; Epstein & Johnson 1998). However, if we were to utilise some of the psychoanalytic insights used elsewhere in the thesis (see particularly chapters 4 & 6) it is possible to see the teacher in Lacanian theory as the 'subject presumed to know' (Lacan 1977). Like the analyst or therapist, the teacher is also subject to mechanisms of desire such as projection and transference. Transference can be defined in the context of therapy as a process of emotional intensity whereby feelings are transferred unconsciously from the patient to the analyst. Lacan (1977) recognises this dynamic as one of desire in which transference can be viewed as love which is addressed to, or directed to knowledge. It is possible to see teacher-pupil relationships from this perspective as a site for the playing out of unconscious desires.

Teaching sex education

The teaching of sex education is a complex and contested political issue, forming the backdrop to pedagogic practice in this area of the curriculum (see chapter 3). Sue Lees (1993) identifies three political stances in relation to the teaching of sex education: conservative, liberal and feminist¹². The conservative framework is concerned with morality and imagined ideals of family life and can be seen to present an unchanging and naturalised social-gender order. The liberal model is premised on the notion of providing

¹² There are many other models for sex education outlined by researchers, including: Aggleton et al. (1989) scientific, obfuscatory, romantic; Carson (1992) traditionalist, progressive, radical & libertarian; Johnson (1996) neo-conservative, neo-liberal, social liberal & emergent.

young people with appropriate information to make informed, socially responsible choices. For Lees this model fails to recognise the hegemonic aspects of dominant power relations seen in 'information' which is often limited and 'takes little account of the context of sexual relationships' (1993: 217). The feminist stance is regarded by Lees as potentially the most progressive as it seeks to question social norms and commonsense assumptions particularly in matters of sex-gender inequality. Within the feminist framework it is possible to address issues of gender relations, personal perspectives and sexual diversity. However, in the schools in which I conducted research, models for sex education invariably broke down at the level of individual practice. Teachers I observed and interviewed adopted aspects of different political stances and rarely identified with one model. Moreover, focusing on frameworks as outlined by Lees highlights the *delivery* of sex education at the expense of considering the ways in which these knowledges are *received*. Although some teachers I interviewed applied aspects of feminist practice to the teaching of sex education, often in the form of biographical detail and open discussion, this was not always met warmly by pupils. Comments such as, 'She's always doing that', 'So bloody what?' and 'I bet she knows the Queen!' capture the feelings of resentment, tedium and derision characteristic of many responses voiced to me by pupils. Wolpe (1988) notes that a feminist teacher in her study who had attempted to establish a sisterly bond with young women in her class was regarded as 'plain nosy' by these girls (1988: 154-5). This suggests that power relations between teachers and pupils shape the context for sex education and mediate classroom interactions in specific ways.

A central dynamic structuring the teaching and learning of sex education is the teacher/pupil binary. The social relations of schooling which structures the ways in which power operates suggests that teachers cannot approach

issues of sexuality in a decontextualised manner (Kehily and Nayak 1996; Lupton & Tulloch 1996). In interactions with pupils in relation to issues of sexuality, teachers carry with them a set of associations which are not easily divorced from their other teaching initiatives. The identity of 'teacher' and the hierarchical structure of institutional arrangements informs the learning agenda in significant ways. The positionality of teachers as instructors/professional educators encourages the deployment of formal teaching methods based on a view of the teacher as holder-of-knowledge and *in control* in the classroom. In terms of sex education, however, formal methods may not be so appropriate to teaching and learning in this field. Many researchers have commented on the need for more informal approaches to sexuality education which recognise pupil sexual cultures as a starting point for teaching and learning (Redman 1994; Thomson 1994; Epstein & Johnson 1998, Lupton & Tulloch 1996, Holland et al. 1990; Measor 1989). As part of such informal techniques, teachers often expect pupils to confide in them, open up areas for discussion and talk frankly. Such strategies can be viewed by working class pupils a particular middle-class mode to be resisted. As I indicated earlier, in one school where I conducted research, attempts to teach sex education using informal methods was not necessarily regarded as successful or welcome from a pupil perspective. Many pupils I spoke with at Oakwood School found informal approaches totally unacceptable and were quick to point out the discontinuities with other areas of the curriculum where they were explicitly told what to do and discussion was not encouraged.

In their study of young women and sexual identities, Thomson and Scott (1991) claim that the subversive potential of sexual knowledge in the classroom context characterised a number of accounts. Their research recognises the ways in which the binary oppositions of teacher/pupil

relations are worked through in the sexual domain:

The sex education class then, becomes a forum within which the two worlds of adolescent sexuality and the authority of school culture come into open confrontation, and it is this juxtaposition that most clearly marks these young women's memories of the classes. It is clear from our data that young people used their own culture of sexuality in order to challenge and embarrass the teacher (Thomson & Scott 1991: 12).

Thomson and Scott's use of the terms 'two worlds' and 'open confrontation' indicate that the teaching and learning of sex education can be a struggle between the different cultures of teachers and pupils which are defined in relation to each other. Their analysis offers a consideration of the *cultural* ways in which sexuality is experienced within schools. Thomson and Scott suggest that sex education lessons can become 'social events' (1991: 10-15) where the contrast between the sexual knowledge of pupils and sex education messages may produce laughter and disruption.

At the level of individual practice, teachers of sex education balance the demands of the classroom with organisational constraints and policy statements. Bonnie Trudell (1992) suggests that this balancing act produces 'defensive teaching'; forms of pedagogy where teachers make splits between ideals and practice in order to control potentially uncomfortable moments. This strategy is reminiscent of my own experiences as a newly qualified teacher, described in chapter 2, where I constantly reshape my practice in an attempt to achieve and maintain control in the classroom. The recourse to 'defensive teaching' can be understood as an attempt to seek safety and avoid controversy in an area where 'risk' can be seen to engender

personal vulnerability, parental complaint and adverse media interest. The difficulties of teaching sex education in the contemporary context are outlined by Epstein and Johnson:

There has been a determined minority attempt to narrow the terms of sexual recognition while at the everyday level and in entertainment and youth related media sexual categories have become more diverse and more fluid. In schools, this distance is expressed as an alignment of pupil cultures with the forms of commercial popular culture in opposition to the sexual culture in school (Epstein & Johnson 1998: 30-31).

As noted in *More Sugar?* (chapter 5), there is often a disjuncture between the domain of the school and the world of popular culture which exists in and around the school. As Richard Johnson (1996) points out, sex education, 'has become a central stake in the struggle over sexual and gender identities' (1996: 167). A key feature of this struggle outlined by Epstein and Johnson (1998) is the social and political conditions which 'attempt to impose very narrow terms of sexual recognition upon a sexually diverse society' (1998: 31).

Five teachers and a nurse

The following section explores and analyses the experiences of five teachers (one of whom is a student teacher) and a school nurse as articulated in individual interviews carried out during the course of my research. All of them worked in or were attached to schools where I carried out research for this study. In the discussion below they are referred by their preferred mode of address used in interactions with pupils in the classroom. I am particularly interested in the respondents' approaches to issues of sexuality,

both in terms of their own sexual identity/biography and the teaching of sex education in school. The relationship between personal biographies and pedagogic practice is also of interest to me in accounts where the interview provided a space for reflections on these themes (this point is taken up in chapter 8). The intention is not to evaluate the pedagogic practice of individual teachers but, rather, to focus upon the interplay between identities, experiences and approaches to teaching and learning, particularly in the domain of sexuality. My analysis of the material generated by interviews with education professionals draws upon and is informed by the literatures outlined above. In the following sections I argue that pedagogic practice can be seen in relation to, and as a product of, the contingencies of auto/biography, desire and the labour process. A close reading of the transcripts indicated that there were four themes which appeared to be important to an understanding of respondents' approaches to sexuality: becoming/being a teacher; sexual biography; approaches to sexual diversity; and approaches to students. In each of these themes respondents spoke of themselves and the relationship between subjectivity, sexuality and pedagogy. I have used these themes as organising categories for this section.

Becoming/being a teacher

Miss Green had been in teaching for twenty-one years and is head of Religious Studies and Personal and Social Education at Oakwood School. She described her motives for becoming a teacher as 'idealistic', wanting to help young people through pastoral care in the school context, rather than through exam success and academic achievement. She said, 'For me the youngsters who sit in front of me are not just brains, not just sort of heads-on-bodies, they are people'. Miss Green made a direct link between the kind of pupil she was and the kind of pupil she wants to help in the course of her career:

Miss Green: Yeah I failed at school, I was terrible, but I had a lot of problems from my own background, a lot of emotional problems so I had a lot of emotional garbage which you couldn't get rid of but it had to be dealt with but there was not room for learning because I was such a mess in other respects. Like so many of our kids who come to school, they bring an awful lot of emotional garbage, they bring all the problems and there we are saying, 'Now you must learn this'. It's unrealistic, it's of no - it doesn't mean anything to them so I know what they feel like to some extent.

Miss Green's empathy with pupils like her former self supported her perception that curriculum-based learning seems irrelevant and inappropriate at times. Her use of the term 'emotional garbage' indicates the power of the emotional realm and the felt need to find ways of dealing with pain and hurt in order to move on. The language in which Miss Green compared herself as a pupil with the pupils she teaches now utilised a therapy/counselling discourse which is humanistic and person-centred. Miss Green's teacher identity was interwoven with a pedagogic style that valued pupil centredness, confidence building and relating to pupils as individuals. The 'pressures' of teaching, however, means that her 'idealism' is compromised on an everyday basis by, 'making wrong decisions, upsetting kids who don't deserve to be upset because you're under stress'. Miss Green's assessment of herself as a teacher was the hope that, in the long term, she has done more good than harm to pupils as individuals.

Mr Carlton, a Craft, Design and Technology (CDT) teacher with many years experience at Oakwood expressed his position in school in terms of a strong

working-class regional identity:

Mr Carlton: I'm from here, right, from this part of the world. I grew up in this part of the world, went away and came back and taught here ever since and I've never been to another school - which could be a mistake, but the kids here I've always managed to relate to and I treat them probably the way their parents treat them and I think that's what it comes down to. They know that if I tell them something then I tell them from the heart, not from what other people are telling them. I try to always tell them the truth, even if it hurts, you know, tell them the truth.

Mr Carlton's identification with the pupils is based on his commitment to common bonds of community, class and location. He suggests that this shared experience forges an emotional connection between himself and the pupils which enables him to speak to pupils as a parent would, from 'the heart'. Mr Carlton's pedagogic style was passionately pupil-centred, 'In my book the kids come first all the time, every time and it's up to me to see that they get the best out of every situation'. Mr Carlton talked about teaching his subject and getting the best out of pupils as part of the same process:

Mr Carlton: If you can't be bothered, you're not going to get anywhere, they're [the kids] the most important thing, they're the raw material that we've got to work with and you've got to work with that raw material and it's something that I've always done, taken a material and made something out of it whether it be a piece of wood or a piece of metal or a piece of a person, you've got to get the kids to work and enjoy the work

that they do.

Here, the terms used by Mr Carlton indicated that he locates his teaching activity within the context of industrial processes and manual labour. The analogy of the workplace resists contemporary notions of professionalism and the language of classroom management. Rather, Mr Carlton's conceptualisation of teaching forms a point of continuity with his working-class identity and regional affiliations to an area renowned for its industrial heritage and large manufacturing base. Mr Carlton further suggests that because CDT is about 'making things' it is possible to break down barriers between teacher and pupils to some extent. In his classroom, he explains, there is no desk providing a symbolic divide between the two groups; teachers and pupils are involved in the same process of productivity, developing and 'making things' out of 'raw material'. Miss Green and Mr Carlton offer accounts of themselves as teachers which make direct links between their background and experiences and their activities as a teacher. The gendered nature of their experience as teachers illustrate the differences between 'making things' and *being made* in the encounter of gendered subjectivity and educational experience as I will demonstrate more clearly below. However, for both teachers there is an emotional connection between their identity (sense of self) and the pedagogic practices they favour. In the context of the interview, Mr Carlton and Miss Green offer a version of themselves as teachers which reads *what you do* through the lens of *who you are*. From this perspective teacher identity becomes a subjective appropriation of personal narratives and pedagogic styles which become fused in moments of self-definition as, 'this is me, this is what I am about'.

Sexual biographies and sexual teaching and learning

Approaches to sex education in school are also bound up with issues of

identity and experience. Beth Marshall, the nurse attached to Clarke School, indicated that her experiences as a teenager shaped her ideas on the importance of sex education:

Beth Marshall: I felt that I had quite a good sex education myself at school. We had a very open science teacher which was good but I was aware that there were other people of a similar sort of age to me that had ended up pregnant at fourteen and with two or three children by the time they were eighteen and you think well, you know, there should be some way of stopping it really or giving people the information so they don't necessarily end up trapped into a life that they're not going to enjoy. So I think that was what - there was a need there - and that's what made me become more involved.

Beth's own experience of sex education as 'open' and 'good' has influenced her approach to sexuality and serves as counterpoint to that of her peers who became pregnant. Beth regarded giving young people information on sexual matters as important; having far-reaching effects on sexual behaviour, lifestyle and quality of life. The link made by Beth between sex education and teenage pregnancy is illustrative of the public health pragmatism that forms a constitutive element of contemporary sex education and health promotion programmes aimed at young people (Thomson 1994). As a school nurse Beth gave sex education lessons on methods of contraception and was also available at lunchtime for advice sessions with individual students. Beth suggested that pupils confide in her and sought advice because she was 'independent' of parents and the school and 'because I think they know I'm not going to get embarrassed'. In her position as a health practitioner, Beth attempted to retain and recreate the

kind of 'openness' she valued as a teenager. Beth offered the following example of her practice:

Beth Marshall: There was a child I saw regularly who was desperate to have a baby of her own and, er, ... I mean we talked about it and I suggested to her that she go and see friends that have had babies and talked to them about how they coped with their life and what a change it had made and, ... she's no longer at school, she's left some time now and she still hasn't got a child and I think because, I don't know whether it was it was because of talking to me or whether it just made her appreciate that it's not just a case of having a little pink bundle, you know, there's a lot of, a lot more responsibility that goes into it. I don't know whether it made her more aware or not or maybe she just sort of grew through that.

In this account Beth is able to give practical advice that engages with the young woman's concerns and takes her seriously. The moralism of health promotion work of this kind is couched in terms of awareness and 'responsibility' and can be seen to be implicit and rooted in 'commonsense'. Beth's approach contrasts sharply with the overtly regulatory strategies found in New Right policy documents such as *Health of the Nation* (Department of Health 1992) where reducing teenage pregnancy is seen as a 'goal' driven by medical, economic and moral imperatives. At other points, however, Beth indicates that, for some young women, having a baby can be a positive experience:

Beth Marshall: Some of the girls that I know that have been to

see me at school and have now got, had either left early or have had babies at sixteen and I've seen them and they all seem very happy. I mean, I haven't seen anybody sort of drudging along looking really miserable. They've all got new pushchairs and they're all out together.

The seemingly contradictory view that teenage pregnancy is generally not a good thing but girls who became pregnant appear 'really happy' makes sense at the level of the individual. Beth outlines a way of looking that is responsive to personal circumstances and pragmatic; through the support, information and guidance provided by school nurses and sex education programmes, young women can make choices appropriate to their needs.

The public health pragmatism outlined by Beth was incorporated into many teachers' accounts of teaching personal and social education. However, this discourse of personal choice and 'safe' health could be seen to compete with other discourses which also shaped the PSE curriculum. Miss Green drew upon the notion of childhood innocence in reminiscences of her own sexual learning and in her approach to sexuality as a teacher. She talked about her adolescence in the following terms:

Miss Green: As far as sexuality was concerned we all did a lot of pretending, we all pretended we all knew all about it and nobody ever knew who knew what. I certainly didn't know any more than anybody else and we all just went on pretending. It was all very silly really... it wasn't so much what we knew, it all revolved round who did what and what experience you'd actually had and there was quite a lot of, 'Oh she's got a boyfriend', 'have you done this?', 'do you do that?'

And the very one who didn't claim to have a boyfriend was the one who ended up getting pregnant... It's always the way, the ones who claimed to have done the most and be the most sexually experienced were the very ones who probably weren't.

Miss Green's memory of adolescent sexuality was articulated as an elaborate pretence of knowledge and experience where nothing was what it seemed. Her account indicates the assumed importance, among the female peer group, of (hetero)sexual knowledge gained through a boyfriend and sustained through rumour and gossip. Ultimately, teenage pregnancy becomes the irrefutable evidence of who knows what, existing as both a marker of sexual knowledge/experience and the stigma of knowing and doing. Miss Green's reflections on her sexual coming-of age in the supposedly 'liberated' period of the late 1960s/early 70s suggested that most girls feigned a knowledge of the sexual while one or two girls quietly attained it. Her approach to the sexuality of young people in the 1990s indicated a certain continuity in her thinking:

Miss Green: I go on a health course and they tell me that a certain percentage of young people under the age of sixteen are sexually active and I stand in front of a class teaching them something about the life of Jesus or something and I look at them and I stop and think, is this really true? Can *you*, this percentage of *you* really be, 'cos to me they look like children and I'm finding this difficult to handle, to take on board. I do believe it and I look at some youngsters and I can well believe it, but if you take the statistics and you look at them across [the classroom], you think, well really.

The reluctant recognition that young people are sexually active produced feelings of belief and disbelief because they 'look like children'. Looking like children invokes a discourse of childhood innocence which positions children as sexually inactive and in need of protection from the potentially corrupting 'adult' world of sex (Jackson 1982; Kitzinger 1988). Miss Green's juxtaposition of 'the life of Jesus' with the 'facts' of young peoples' sexual behaviour indicates the ways in which different discourses can be drawn upon to produce moments of subjective realisation. From Miss Green's perspective, most young people *look* innocent and if they're not then they should be. The exception, in this schema, is the small number of sexually precocious 'children' who bear the testament of sexual experience on their bodies.

At a later point in the interview Miss Green returned to the theme of teenage pregnancy and suggested that there has been a change in attitude to young single mothers which has produced further social problems:

Miss Green: Well teenage pregnancy is increasing and that seems to be very depressing. I don't know, I think that's almost out of our sphere of influence because it seems to be socially acceptable now. We've swung from a time when awful things happened to youngsters who got pregnant and they were expected to give up their babies, there was no question of them keeping them and no support and no sympathy, to almost an attitude we seem to have, I mean this became a parliamentary debate didn't it - about youngsters who are getting pregnant to get a flat? In my last school, I know because I had three in my Religious Studies group who

did it. I mean, I know for a fact it has been happening and they were quite open why they've done it, they'll get accommodation, they'll get this, that and everything else. We seem to have swung and that seems to be something I don't think our influence as teachers is going to say much about that. I think it's society's attitude really. I might be wrong, it's just how I feel about it at the moment.

Here, Miss Green outlines the key features of a contemporary moral panic: teenage pregnancy is out of control and is exacerbated by a climate of social acceptability and state provision of council accommodation, benefits and services for young single mothers. Miss Green is clearly disturbed by these events and feels that teachers and schools have little impact upon such phenomena. Miss Green's comments are infused with a moral tone and a sense of resignation which implies that sexual standards and sexual behaviours are shaped by the world beyond the school gates. As a teacher, Miss Green can observe the changes and chart the moral decline but feels powerless to intervene. Whereas Beth has an implicit moral agenda which is incorporated into the PSE curriculum in discussions with students, Miss Green has an explicit moral agenda which exists as a personal stance and is not overtly referred to in her teaching of sex education. For both Beth and Miss Green there is a complex configuration between what-you-think and what-you-teach which is never directly translated into forms of pedagogy. Miss Green is responsible for sex education at Oakwood but feels that the 'real' sexual learning happens outside school. Beth, however, is not a member of the school staff but recognises the school as an important site for sexual learning.

A sense of what is possible and appropriate for schools to achieve within the

domain of the sexual is an important starting point for some teachers. Miss Woods was a senior teacher and Head of House at Oakwood School. She had been teaching for twelve years and had gained experience in four different secondary schools in the region. Miss Woods expressed her concerns in the following way:

Miss Woods: Problems today start with schools being expected to deliver things which the family unit could effectively deliver, er, in a different way because there is constant contact there, they [the pupils] can go back with questions... a science lesson can do the basics and PSE can answer questions about things they might see, like the HIV billboards. But I would like to see the family being able to do that. I could never have done it with my parents, I'll be perfectly honest, so here's me setting standards and goals and asking parents to take on the role knowing full well my parents wouldn't have handled it. I hope if I was a parent I would.

Miss Woods uses the language of managerialism in which terms such as 'expectation', 'delivery' and 'effectiveness' become important signifiers in outlining a social order of who should do what and why. Miss Woods realises, from her own experience, that the family cannot always take on responsibility for sex education but her wish for this to happen can be seen as a powerfully imagined ideal. Miss Woods talks about her own sexual learning in the early 1970s as a difficult and 'painful' time in her life. At her all-girls secondary school, Miss Woods explained, there was very little formal sex education but there was a well developed pupil sexual culture with plenty of informal learning. Miss Woods describes two hierarchies: the 'in-crowd' of attractive, street-wise girls who gained credibility through

sexual experience and the 'other group' of quiet, immature girls who were naive and inexperienced.

Miss Woods: I was very much *not* a part of the in-crowd, very left out, you did feel left out because to be part of it you had to *at least* have experienced deep French kissing and it had to be with a certain member of the local sixth form, so the quality of who you were kissing, all these sorts of things... the drug scene was very prolific and the 'you can sleep with anybody' thing was certainly very loudly spoken. People like me would think there was something wrong with me - 'My God, what's going on?'

Feeling left out and being out-of-step with the times draws upon the contrast between personal experience and external social relations; the sexual revolution is turning everybody round but some of us are in the same place. Miss Woods reminiscences indicate the importance of sexual practice to peer group status and suggests that girls may codify and rank sexual encounters in similar ways to boys (described chapter 6). Like Beth and Miss Green, Miss Woods dwells upon issues of teenage pregnancy and compares her experiences as a pupil with her experiences as a teacher:

Miss Woods: I remember having one film all about the risk of getting pregnant and it was all about this girl who got caught and it was a terribly messy experience for everyone, it was awful. She was running through a field, running away from the situation. I can still remember it ... and that was the only sex education we received ... it was very bad to get pregnant if you weren't married, that was it. I mean today, for example,

last night some girls came to the Christmas concert and they brought their babies with them, now that would never have happened in my day. If a girl was [pregnant], she was expelled from school fullstop, she didn't have any ties with the school afterwards and the school wouldn't have anything to do with her.

In interviews with Beth, Miss Green and Miss Woods, it is clear that they place issues of contraception and pregnancy at the centre of the sex education curriculum. Their own experience of sexual learning underlined the message that teenage pregnancy was a central concern for young women and continues to be so, though social attitudes have changed. As sex education practitioners, the respondents outline a sexual biography which positions themselves as 'the ones that didn't get pregnant'. From their narratives it is clear that a feature of girls' sexual maturation is to observe the stigma of pregnancy in female peer groups and internalise the message. Another significant aspect of their sexual biographies appears to be the sexual climate in which they grew up. Although related to in different ways, the popular notion of the 60s and 70s as an era which resisted repression and forged new sexual agendas, shaped the ways in which respondents viewed issues of sexuality and their place within the sex-gender order. Beth's experiences lead to investments in openness and individual responsibility, while Miss Green and Miss Woods indicate that it may be important for girls to go against the grain by resisting pressure to become sexually active/experienced. The experiences related by Miss Woods and Miss Green resonate with issues raised in chapter 5 where girls discuss issues of sexuality in relation to teenage magazines. The accounts of teachers and of pupils point to the abiding notion of reputation for girls as an important structuring feature in their lives and their identities. This has implications

for the practice of sex education, suggesting that it may be important to address issues of gender and social experience specifically in such contexts.

The gendered significant of transitions in adulthood is further outlined by Mr Carlton's account of his experiences. Unlike the three female respondents, Mr Carlton talked about his youth in strikingly different terms:

Mr Carlton: Not to put too fine a point on it, I was, er, completely and utterly a bastard when I was younger and no female meant anything to me. Now please don't take offence at that (laughs) but I was one of the boys, rugby player, drinking quite a lot, playing the field. And then I met the person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with and her attitudes have rubbed off a lot on me. She made me see that things I was talking about then were not quite right.

MJK: What sort of things?

Mr Carlton: How deep d'you want to go? (laughs) ... My attitude to women was appalling ... she [my partner] always thinks about how what she does effects other people and that's rubbed off on me because before I couldn't give a damn.

Mr Carlton's construction of himself as the rugby-playing, hard-drinking, philandering lad illustrates how the cultural transition into adulthood is a specifically gendered project. Mr Carlton's masculine identity is publicly played out and privately appraised in the intimacy of sexual partnership. In his account, 'falling in love' produces a dramatic shift in perspective which encourages reflexivity, especially in the sphere of gender relations. Mr

Carlton suggests that his experiences provide a point of identification with the boys in the school:

MJK: What would you do if you came across lads who were like you when you were young?

Mr Carlton: I dread it (laughs). No I don't dread it, no, no, um, I think most lads are like what I was when I was young, or I was like them. It's just a stage of growing up and all I try telling them is there's nothing new, I've done all this. You're not going to shock me by the things that you do because I've done it all and worse 'cos I've got fifteen, twenty years more experience of doing it than you've got. Don't try and pull a fast one ... and once they see that - I bet most of the people you've spoken to who say they can relate to me are boys.

Indeed, many boys I spoke with during my time at Oakwood did speak warmly of Mr Carlton as 'someone you can have a laff with' and 'the best teacher in the school'. The dynamics of this relationship can be seen as a style of camaraderie, structured through power relations, marked by sexism and the privileging of hegemonic forms of masculinity. Certainly the idea that 'laddishness' is a developmental phase for young males would support this view. However, many girls in the school also held Mr Carlton in high esteem and sought him out as someone to confide in in moments of crisis. Mr Carlton did have considerable experience of talking with girls who became pregnant and, in these circumstances, he saw his role as supporting their decision in relation to the pregnancy and talking through the implications with them. It is a measure of his success as a teacher that he was still in touch with many former pupils, girls and boys, whom he had

counselled over the years.

Teachers and sexual diversity

The normative presence of heterosexuality is as much a part of teachers' cultures as it is an integral part of pupil sexual cultures. Staffroom talk of partners, children and erotic attachment assumed that *everyone* was heterosexual and sexual banter among teachers served to sustain and regulate this view. In this environment, sexual diversity frequently presents itself as an issue that teachers are fearful of and find difficult to incorporate into the sex education curriculum. Miss Green talked about this fear in terms of external constraint:

Miss Green: Homosexuality, we don't really touch, um, in the sense that the law says we must not promote homosexuality and, in fact, that is a very difficult one because the government's definition of promoting has almost been to the extent of even discussing it. If you have local authorities who are refusing to put on certain plays because they have some reference or homosexual content and that is considered promoting it, then that puts teachers in a very difficult position. It would mean that talking about it, raising issues even, can be construed as promoting.

Here Miss Green is referring to Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988) which states that local authorities should not 'promote homosexuality'. As schools are no longer managed by local authorities, this act does not strictly apply to the teaching of sex education. However, Miss Green's concerns should be taken seriously as an illustration of the symbolic power of the law. Though she points to the contradictions posed by the

elision between discussion and promotion, it is clear that this legislative measure can have a powerful silencing effect on individuals and institutions. In this case Miss Green's 'difficult position' can be understood as a concern to avoid the controversy and media attention which may ensue if homosexuality was directly addressed in school. The conservatism of schools in the domain of the sexual can be seen as a response to the traditionalist campaigning of the New Right which combines a moralism in sexual politics with an agenda of accountability and choice for public service institutions. In this climate schools may be encouraged to regard sexual progressivism as risky, potentially damaging and counter productive to survival in the commodified sphere of educational markets. In other respects, however, Section 28 may play into already existing feelings of discomfort and homophobia on the part of teachers, where recourse to 'the law' may be a way of displacing issues of sexual diversity. Significantly, in other sites where sexual diversity was more readily embraced, Clause 28 provided the impetus for campaigns for gay and lesbian rights (see Stacey 1991; Cooper 1994; Smith 1994) which can be seen as a powerful template for radical activism (Epstein & Johnson 1998).

The appearance of homosexuality as biologically inherent was a feature of many accounts offered to me by pupils in school. Many young men, in particular, spoke of being gay as 'wrong' and 'unnatural' since it violates 'traditional' masculinity. This acted as a rationale for a range of homophobias in pupil cultures, as noted and discussed in chapter 6. The view that being gay is, in some way, unnatural was also shared by some teachers I spoke with, suggesting that the biological framework of sexuality can be frequently worked and reworked in school. Miss Green spoke of gay pupils in the following way:

Miss Green: You look at some youngsters and you can be, you know there are one or two, perhaps more so with boys. I mean I can think of lads I have taught and you've thought, yes, you know, you appear to have the makings of, not you are *going to become*, but you *are gay*. Perhaps sometimes when they are eleven or twelve you are, it's unfortunate for them, but you can sort of spot them and then you meet them much later on and you know definitely you were right but you wonder what's happened to them in the intervening years, who was there for them, who was there to help them, who dared say anything to them?

In phrases such as 'you can sort of spot them', Miss Green suggests that gay is identified and defined against the appearance of a normative version of heterosexuality. From this perspective gay pupils can be seen as 'victims' of their genetic make-up, marked as different by their physical appearance and biological destiny. The heterosexist discourse used by Miss Green focuses on the sexual difference of gay pupils rather than the homophobic practices of students in school.

Miss Green: There are boys whose behaviour is sometimes - I can only use, you see, I can only use the word camp and they sometimes have mannerisms ...

MJK: And their progress through school, what happens to them?

Miss Green: Yes, they are usually victims of one sort or another, teased, not perhaps bullied but sometimes bullied,

teased, isolated.

Here the discourse of heterosexism can be seen as an 'explanation' for the repertoire of discriminatory behaviour constitutive of homophobias in school. Being 'camp' and having mannerisms turns certain pupils into targets for abuse, or, viewed another way, the pathologising of sexual minorities by sexual majorities produces inequalities which can be located and played out on the body of gay males.

It is clear from Miss Green's account that gay students in school experience pain and isolation which has been described as the 'burden of aloneness' (KOLA 1994). The lack of support available to gay pupils suggests that the domain of the school, in the contemporary climate, does not view heterosexism as difficult or problematic. The homophobic practices to be found in pupil cultures are rarely challenged by teachers and schools remain hostile places for gay pupils. Indeed, as Miss Green's account indicates, the 'heterosexual presumption' (Epstein & Johnson 1994) of pupils may be shared by many teachers. The interplay between homophobic practices and the discourse of heterosexism produces sexual inequalities which become structural, integrated into institutional arrangements which normalise and privilege heterosexual relations.

In the three schools where I conducted research I did not encounter any students who claimed a gay identity. Young men who were called gay in school suggested to me that it was factors other than sexual orientation that provided the impetus for homophobic name-calling. These factors could include a positive approach to teachers and schoolwork, lack of interest in sport, a penchant for 'arty/feminine' subjects and a preference for close female, rather than male, friendships or, as I noted in an earlier chapter, even

the fact of having blond hair. The seemingly arbitrary range of characteristics which could be codified as 'gay' is suggestive of the links between gender and sexuality and the ways in which the school provides resources for the fashioning of sex-gender identities.

Alison, a student teacher in the first year of a B.Ed degree, identified as lesbian and came out to friends during Year 11 of secondary school. In an interview she reflected on her school experiences as a period marked by the pain and pleasure of discovering difference:

Alison: Well going back to when I was at school, my friendship was mainly people who worked hard and got good exam results and I didn't work hard and sometimes got good exam results and they were all straight and I wasn't and I used to have major arguments with them about it.

MJK: What sort of things?

Alison: Well one of my school friends stopped speaking to me when I came out, never spoke to me again and that was someone I'd been close to for about seven years. And I had a lot of other friends who were less wanting to work hard at school and got less good exam results but some of them could if they wanted and one of them was open to talking about things and other friends who were just going through difficult times and we just kind of hung together but didn't really talk much.

MJK: So was there a sense at school where you saw yourself as

different?

Alison: Oh yeah, yeah. My last year at school was the year of the general election and we had a mock election in the school and as well as the usual political parties people could make up their own political parties and I actually got told at one point, 'We don't want you in our party, don't want you voting for us, we're the Shoot Homosexuals Party'. I mean I was personally sought out and told this so I mean, you know. It wasn't a secret even though I hadn't actually decided or come to a knowledge of being gay. It wasn't a secret in the school. I did have 'sing if you're glad to be gay' written on my school bag, for reasons unknown to myself, it just felt right to write it. And I also felt because two of my closest friends were gay men that I couldn't say 'no, I'm not gay' because that would be denying them but I don't know whether, I mean that was how it consciously felt but maybe it was actually because it would be denying myself, I don't know.

Alison describes her burgeoning sexual identity against the backdrop of widespread school-based homophobias which damage friendship and, at times, takes the form of personal threat and physical violence. Alison describes an approach to school and schoolwork which involved moving from one friendship group to another in order to find a space where her sexual politics were tolerated, if not recognised and accepted. Her account suggests that sexuality is an integral feature of pupil peer group cultures and plays a part in establishing hierarchies and divisions among the student population. Alison's sense of sexual difference is marked by feelings of confusion and ambiguity. Embracing sexual difference in the Tom Robinson

anthem of the late 70s existed alongside feelings of bewilderment and indecision which suggests that the process of *becoming* can be troubled and troubling. The feelings of ambivalence described by young people in relation to sexual identity is noted by Mac an Ghail (1991) in his study on young gay males:

The students described the formation of their sexual identity as part of a wider process of adolescent development, with all its fluidity, experiments, displacements, and confusions. For them sexuality could not be reduced to a conventional perception of a heterosexual-homosexual (straight-gay) continuum, on which each group's erotic and emotional attachments are demarcated clearly and unambiguously. They spoke of contradictions ... the complexity and confusion of young males' sexual coming of age (Mac an Ghail 1991: 297).

Alison's reflections on her sexual identity from late adolescence into adulthood would support Mac an Ghail's observations:

Alison: I think I avoided the issue of sexuality and whether I was heterosexual or not ... I used to say things to myself like, 'Well the next relationship I have will be with a woman' but I also thought, when I was having a relationship with a man, like the first man, 'I want this relationship to go on for the rest of my life'. That would have been a terrible idea, but part of me did think that, but another part of me thought, 'Well, I want to be with a woman'... At one point, quite early on, I attached the label bisexual to myself, then I was with a woman and I attached the label gay to myself, then I had a bit of an

encounter and I reacquired the bisexual label some years later and then I ditched it again.

Alison's account of the twists and turns involved in internally voiced thoughts and external labels indicate that her sense of sexual identity is far from secure and unproblematic. The identity labels of gay-bisexual-straight were appropriated by Alison at different points in her life as a response to the sexual relationship she was in at the time. However, the labels do not seem to capture the feelings of emotional attachment and erotic desire expressed by Alison. The intensely powerful feelings involved in sexual relationships seem to suggest to Alison that her identity should be shaped and 'explained' by them. The attempt to consolidate sexual identity in and through sexual relationships is also a characteristic feature of young men in this study. In these examples young men seek to fashion a version of heterosexual masculinity based on sexual interactions with young women. These accounts indicate that the subject repeatedly attempts to consolidate sexual identity in relationships but the consolidation is never fully achieved. For young males in school, the peer group acts as a sphere for the display and regulation of sex-gender identities, a place where young men define themselves and others. For Alison, however, there is no place in school where she can achieve a sense of belonging, no place of identification with people-like-me. So where does Alison look to for her ideas on sex-gender identity?

During the course of the interview Alison indicated that she had to be particularly resourceful in finding material which spoke to her of sexual diversity. In this respect media sources, popular culture and community based initiatives become important to her sense of self from the age of fifteen onwards and can be seen to provide her with coping strategies in the

absence of more tangible forms of support from teachers, friends and family:

Alison: I read a book when I was about fifteen called *All That False Instruction* which was purple and had in pink letter on the cover *A novel of lesbian love*. I got six books out of the library that I didn't want so I could hide it and I hid it under the bed for a month and read that. That was quite dramatic, not 'cos of its, because it was a perfectly ordinary novel, but it was - this is a lesbian novel and there is actually one in (name of town) library and I have personally read it sort of thing. It wasn't 'cos of the text, it was just 'cos it was there and it was such a palava getting it out and hiding it under the bed.

The elaborate process of discovery and concealment involved in finding the book and hiding it can be seen to have symbolic significance for pupils developing a gay/lesbian identity in school. Being gay or being associated with anything gay must be kept secret from the publicly constructed sphere of school, library and family. The need for secrecy creates the confined space of the closet and, from the closet, individuals like Alison embark on the search for a different sort of public. Alison describes another activity she engaged in at the age of fifteen in the following way:

Alison: I used to read the *Guardian* and I used to cut articles about gay politics out of the *Guardian* and stick them on my bedroom wall for no apparent reason. I mean it wasn't apparent to myself, never mind anybody else.

After leaving school at sixteen, Alison took a job in an office and, again, found that she was pursuing her own public/private agenda which involves

concealment in one sphere and discovery in another.

Alison: There was a radical bookshop just down the road and I used to sneak out at lunchtime and go and read *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* to cheer myself up at lunchtime, not because I was obsessed with sex but because it was some sort of a window onto something I thought that I wanted that I didn't really know much about.

The 'novel of lesbian love', the self-made collage from the *Guardian* and *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* were cited by Alison as significant to her developing sense of identity and difference. It is interesting to contrast Alison's experiences with those of the young women I studied in chapter 5. Girls claiming a heterosexual identity brought cultural resources (eg. teen mags) into school and assimilated them into friendship groups and school arrangements where they provided a sphere for sexual learning. For Alison, cultural resources were also important for her sexual learning, however, she described her relationship to them as solitary acts, pursued privately out of school without reference to friends or school structures. Alison's account is illustrative of the ways in which heterosexist discourses produce compelling modes of sex-gender conformity in school where other forms of desire are not recognised or spoken.

Mr Carlton, however, suggested that it was possible to challenge the homophobia of pupil cultures in interactions with students:

MJK: Do you find the students have got quite conservative attitudes to, say, homosexuality, for example?

Mr Carlton: It's a taboo area for a lot of them and it's parental attitudes. Yes, I suppose conservative is probably a good word, I don't like the word but that's the one that describes it best and I would not want to say things that go directly against parental opinions except they're not my opinions, so I'm giving my opinion. If the parents disagree with it then I want to talk to them as well. Now I can't do that, so I tend to put things in a way that, 'Well that's my view, that's your parents, you make your own mind up'.

MJK: So would you say, 'Well this is my view, you may hear others?'

Mr Carlton: Oh every time and I try to show a variety of opinions through other sources. One of my closest friends is gay, I'm not, but he don't mind that so why should I mind him being gay, you know.

Here Mr Carlton suggests that the homophobia of pupils can be traced to parental attitudes and teachers have to be mindful of parental sensibilities in areas where there may be a potential source of disagreement between them and the school. To overcome this difficulty, Mr Carlton has developed teaching strategies which pose alternatives in terms of personal opinion and individual choice. The 'one-of-my-best-friends-is' argument is often regarded as the articulation of a liberal position which favours tolerance rather than diversity. In the school context, however, Mr Carlton's approach can be seen as a significant challenge to dominant sexual categories, introducing students to ideas and perspectives which they may not have considered previously. Mr Carlton's interventionist approach can be seen to

be effective in situations where the teacher-pupil relationship is positive and mutually affirming: in this context it is possible to stimulate discussion, challenge normative assumptions and provide other ways of looking.

Approaches to students

In this sub-section I focus on the ways in which teachers view their relationship with students and adopt an attitude to informal processes of schooling such as peer group cultures and the 'hidden curriculum' of sexual learning outside of Personal and Social Education. Drawing upon the analysis outlined in chapter 3, my argument here is that teacher-pupil relations shape the informal sphere of school and provide us with insights into the everyday cultures of teachers and pupils. The ways in which teacher-pupil relations are played out at the informal level has an impact on the official curriculum and school policy which is mediated through the informal cultures of teachers and pupils. Kenway and Willis' (1998) study of gender and feminism in school suggests that teachers tend to adopt two overlapping orientations to the emotional world of students: the 'therapeutic'; and the 'authoritarian'. The authors indicate that the therapeutic approach recognises the importance of the experiential realm, while the authoritarian approach places more emphasis on students as cognitive and rational learners. Aspects of these approaches can be identified in teacher's practice of PSE.

Miss Green, in keeping with Thomson and Scott (1991) indicate that teachers and pupils move in separate spheres:

Miss Green: There's a big gulf between us, they've got a whole world which we are not part of ... to maintain order you have

to have a distance. There are two different worlds and maybe that's how it's got to be.

For Miss Green the world of teachers and the world of pupils cannot be bridged because of the inherent structure of school relations. The discipline and order which teachers must maintain is premised on 'distance' from pupil cultures. The notion of 'two cultures' supports the concept of the 'hidden curriculum' which suggests that much of what pupils learn in school can be seen as social learning and takes place in informal spaces outside the official curriculum. Miss Green agrees that there is a hidden curriculum in relation to sexual learning but holds out the hope that Personal and Social Education will also have a voice:

MJK: Do you think that the hidden curriculum might be more effective for students learning about sex than the official curriculum?

Miss Green: Oh I suspect that's the way they get the misinformation or real information, a bit of both I suspect, yes, I'm sure it always will be. It was when I was at school ... I can only say I hope a lot of the accurate information we are able to give them through PSE will filter through to the hidden curriculum and I'm sure it will. It will be made use of in the same way as some of the messages they get from the media will be made use of. Some are going to be conflicting ... but I just hope that the message, the correct information that we're giving them in school is going to be sufficiently helpful to them to make sense of all the other things.

Here Miss Green suggests that PSE is able to provide accurate information which can be assimilated into pupil perspectives. There is a certain appeal to rationality outlined by Kenway and Willis (1998) in Miss Green's support of PSE, promoting the notion that the 'accurate' and 'correct' will triumph over misinformation and will ultimately enable students to make sense of competing messages. In certain moments Miss Green indicated that it is possible to gain access to the pupil world:

MJK: Do you ever catch glimpses of how the students may be thinking and feeling about sex? Do you ever hear tales or gather pieces of information?

Miss Green: Not unless I actually sit down and talk to a group of youngsters. I was on cover one day and it was girls PE and they couldn't do the lesson so I'd watched a programme about young people and sex and thought 'was this really the case?' So I started talking to these girls and they were very open and quite willing to talk and, yes, only if I do that sort of thing because obviously we don't intrude.

In this example Miss Green discovered that a different set of teacher-pupil relationships become possible when the normal school timetable was disrupted. The openness of pupils in this instance challenged, albeit temporarily, the idea of two closely bounded school cultures.

Whereas Miss Green was accepting of school structures and the ways in which they impact upon pupil-teacher relations, Mr Carlton suggested that personal relationships between teachers and pupils can transgress school structures. His pedagogic style and personal biography insisted that, in his

case, teacher and pupils occupy the same world through their shared identifications of class and locality. This mutual recognition between Mr Carlton and the pupils he taught created the conditions for an affirmative approach to PSE. In this area of the curriculum, as in CDT, Mr Carlton has developed his own pedagogic style:

Mr Carlton: Six years ago it started and it (PSE) was awful. It was all bits of paper and it was worksheet, worksheet, worksheet and I was getting brassed off with handing these worksheets out so I thought, 'What's PSE? Who can say what PSE is?' PSE is you and me sitting down talking to each other, getting their ideas out of them and that's what I did.

Mr Carlton described his approach to PSE as a highly individualised pedagogy, based on his experiences, which incorporated strategies such as: responding to local events, being provocative, winding people up and using humour. His ability to communicate with pupils was enhanced by his use of colloquial terms and regional dialect.

Mr Carlton: Accent is an automatic turn off. You get someone who's talking in a southern accent and they [the pupils] don't wanna know. Where, if you call a spade a spade ... The way I talk to kids sometimes is the way they talk to each other and if that involves using four letter words I use them. If it makes it understood and used in context then, to me, that's not wrong ... Some teachers here might disapprove of the language but if you've got to explain something and you're talking 'a penis', well to the kids, 'a dick' you know. You make people understand through the language.

It is interesting to note that controversy over use of language acquires significance in debates where different political perspectives are at stake. Historically, in struggles around gender and race and class, language becomes a locus of concern; the promotion of certain terms and the prohibition of others become important signifiers carrying associative meanings and identities in moments of political change and social awareness (see Volosinov 1973; Fairclough 1989). Mr Carlton illustrates the ways in which language can be seen as a site of struggle at the level of the local. Mr Carlton's approach to language forms an integral part of his pedagogic repertoire, providing a further point of identification between himself and the pupils. His willingness to use the language of pupil cultures, particularly in relation to sexuality, risks disapproval from other teachers but offers a compelling mode of engagement for pupils. Mr Carlton's championing of the vernacular contrasts with the views and practices of other sex educators I observed and spoke with. Beth, the school nurse at Clarke School, used the accepted commonplace terms for contraceptives and sexual practices when addressing a class, though she did acknowledge terms which may be in use among pupils:

Beth: This is a condom or sheath. You may have other words for this, like johnny, rubber, French letter, nodder, but it's the same thing.

Mrs Evans, however, actively discouraged the use of colloquial terms in discussions of sexual matters and often prefaced student responses with comments such as, 'Now you can say whatever you feel here, as long as you use the proper names for things' (fieldnotes 22.1.96). Though both teachers claimed student-centred pedagogies, Mr Carlton and Mrs Evans clearly

differed in approaches to language. The divergent styles of the two teachers illustrate the diversity within student-centred approaches and the ways in which pedagogies become personal. In this respect the use of terms and ways of speaking highlight the links between language and identity which serve to demarcate boundaries for individuals. Through the endorsement of particular language registers and vocabulary, teachers establish the terrain of comfort/discomfort, acceptability/unacceptability, recognition/non-recognition upon which sexual issues can be broached.

Concluding comments:

In this chapter I have focused on the experiences of five teachers and a school nurse. My analysis of their experiences traces the connections between their auto/biographies and subjective investments to suggest that the personal plays a part in the development of pedagogic practice. The glimpse into the life histories of the practitioners I interviewed illustrate that their approaches to teaching and learning have been shaped by their past experiences as pupils and as gendered sexual subjects. In many cases respondents' provided an account of what kind of pupil they were and how they learned about sex which was insightful and instructive in terms of an analysis of pedagogic practice in the field of sexuality education. The interviews I conducted indicate that experience is translated into pedagogic practice in complex and unexpected ways. The realisation that the sex educators I interviewed were, in their different contexts, the 'good girls' who didn't disrupt their education by unplanned pregnancy becomes significant to an understanding of contemporary practice and will be explored more fully in chapter 9.

The analysis of interview material in this chapter also suggests that the teacher-pupil relationship provides the context for the practice of sex

education and can influence the success of initiatives in this field. Policy approaches to sex education (see Sex Education Forum 1995) emphasise the importance of curriculum documents which strike the 'right' note, encourage certain pedagogic approaches over others and specify criteria for teaching and learning. My argument, however, is that the success of sex education depends on a contingency of factors which cannot necessarily be accounted for at the level of policy. Mr Carlton, for example, is unlikely to match the selection criteria drawn up in a person specification for the post of sex educator. Rather, his profile as rugby-playing, heavy-drinking lad would place him beyond the bounds of desirability for the teaching of a subject which requires sensitivity and understanding, especially in relation to issues of gender politics. However, the success of Mr Carlton's approach to sex education and PSE generally indicate that other factors may be in play in the development of 'good practice'. Mr Carlton's identifications as local, working-class, speaker of the regional dialect and part of the community give him a grounding which facilitates the development of positive and mutually affirming pupil-teacher relations. In other words, the qualities, characteristics and identities valued by the student population become important to the success of pedagogic practice. At Oakwood School there is an engagement between the local culture of the school and Mr Carlton's organic approach to teaching and learning. This indicates the importance of context to policy initiatives and pedagogic strategies and the difficulties of specifying a formula for 'success'.

The following chapter focuses specifically on issues of methodology. In chapter 8, the penultimate chapter, I outline and discuss the three main methodological approaches I have used in this study. This is followed by an account of my research and the processes by which it became a piece of academic writing. I realise it is usual for a methodology chapter to be placed

at the beginning of a thesis rather than at the end. In this respect I am breaking with tradition by leaving issues of methodology to a final consideration of the research as a whole. I have made this decision in order to comment on the previous chapters in the light of the research and analysis presented there rather than in anticipation of such a discussion.

Furthermore, when presenting aspects of this work at conferences I have frequently met with emotionally charged responses and, on some occasions, individuals have been offended and disturbed by the presentation of young people and issues of sexuality that I offer. I would like to consider some of these responses within the scope of a chapter on methodologies in which the implications of researching sexuality in schools is explored.

CHAPTER 8

Researching sexuality in school: methodological musings

Introduction

Researching sexuality in schools is a complicated business. Linking 'sex' and 'school' together as a focus for study brings the researcher into direct contact with many of the symbolic boundaries that shape contemporary schooling. Constructions such as public/private, adult/child, teacher/pupil, male/female, proper/improper organise social relations within the school in ways that seek to prescribe the domain of the sexual. Researchers in this field have commented on the ways in which informal school-based cultures are saturated with sex, through humour, innuendo, double-entendre and explicit commentary, yet the official culture of the school frequently seeks to deny the sexual and desexualise schooling relations (Epstein & Johnson 1998; Jackson 1982). Sex education remains a small and discrete part of the curriculum, while abundant and pervasive ways of talking about sex flourish in social spaces occupied by teachers and pupils. The symbolic boundaries containing issues of sexuality in school juxtaposed with the simultaneous desire to speak the sexual, points to some ways of understanding the sexual politics of schooling. Foucault (1988: 10) expresses the view that, '[t]he association of prohibition and strong incitations to speak is a constant feature of our culture'. This observation leads Foucault to suggest, in his later work, that people are 'freer than they feel' (1988: 10). This way of looking emphasises the productive potential of constraint; policing produces rebellion, boundaries create and define the unbounded in contexts where constraint and freedom exist in a dialectical relationship of support and mutual definition. Researching sexuality in schools calls for an approach which renders visible the social relations of

schooling; which recognises the context in which sexuality is, at once, present and absent, the forms it takes and the responses it generates. This approach involves the researcher in observations and actions. Observing the symbolic boundaries shaping sexuality in school necessarily incurs an interpretive understanding of the context of school relations and the development of an analysis of the dynamics which are shaping and informing the boundaries.

In this chapter I want to ask the vexing question that besets social researchers: how do we know what we know? How can social researchers claim to 'know' the social world they study? On what basis can theoretical insights be made? I would like to develop an account of my research which explores these questions and which engages critically with the research process I am implicated in during the course of this study. A starting point for this account is the multi-layered nature of any research activity where social engagement necessarily involves a recognition that many things are happening at once. In my own case this process of doing one thing while holding on to multiples involved me in a series of recognitions relating to the discourses shaping sexuality, the agency of individuals, and also the recognition that researchers work within, rather than outside of, discourses. This chapter outlines and offers a perspective on the three main research methodologies I have used: ethnography; feminist; and auto/biographical approaches, before considering in more detail some key methodological features of the study. My consideration of methodological issues points to the haphazard nature of social enquiry and the eclectic ways in which analysis is developed.

Ethnography as method

Volumes have been written about the ethnographic method.

Conventionally, ethnographers produce the monograph, closely followed by an account of the 'making' of the monograph (Atkinson 1992).

Methodological reflections on ethnographic work have become routine and are regarded as the expected and generally accepted practice within academic communities. The 'I was there' account (Pratt 1992) produces a version of the research process from the perspective of the researcher. This account both elucidates and conceals aspects of the research process.

Ethnography has a difficult and troubling legacy. As a mode of investigation into the social world pioneered by anthropologists, the ethnographic method has never quite come to terms with its colonial past. The history of ethnographic study mirrors the history of colonial expansion and the 'conquest' of other peoples and other places. In this respect ethnographers have been involved in relations of exploitation: first world/third world, Western/non-Western, white/black, privileged/underprivileged, us/them. The exploitative potential of ethnographic study continues to cause anxiety for contemporary ethnographers who struggle to redefine their discipline and their practices in the shadows of the past (see Clifford & Marcus 1986). The reevaluation of anthropology with regard to its 'objects' of study has involved practitioners in debates and theoretical reflections concerning the limitations of representation itself.

Contemporary ethnographers generally recognise and work within the broad poststructuralist notion that there is no 'truth' out there to be discovered. Ethnographies are now widely regarded as 'fictions' - social and textual constructions of various sorts, generated by a range of social encounters. A significant theme that has emerged in ethnographic writing is a concern with questions of authorship and authorial voice - who is speaking for whom and with what authority? In many studies this has been

addressed through what Clifford and Marcus (1986: 14) call, 'the self-reflexive "fieldwork account"' where the ideal of participant observation and ethnographic experience are shown to be problematic. In these accounts haphazard events occur, relationships break down, difficulties and dilemmas are openly addressed¹³. Moreover, ethnographers working within this framework recognise that research involves a relationship with the Self which is constituted through research subjects in the dynamics of encounter, engagement and analysis,

It becomes clear that every version of an "other", wherever found, is also the construction of a "self" (Clifford & Marcus 1986: 23).

A clear shift in the aims and focus of ethnographic enquiry can be seen in anthropological and sociological work from the 1940s onwards. In this literature there is a recognition that reflections on the research relationship between self and other does not necessarily involve travelling to faraway lands and studying unfamiliar groups of people. Ethnographic methods can also be applied to familiar urban contexts as the landmark studies of the Chicago School illustrated in their sociological analyses of youth and 'deviance' in American cities (eg. Cohen, A.K. 1955; Whyte 1981).

Paul Atkinson (1990; 1992) has documented the ways in which ethnographic writing is predicated on literary methods which offer conventional ways of making sense of the world through the use of language. Textual devices such as genre, narrative, tropes, metaphor, reported speech and action are employed to render the social world readable to those who were not part of the field encounter. Atkinson suggests that 'the field', as such, is produced

¹³. See Cesara (1982) for a striking example of this. Her anthropological study describes her research experience and the consequences, for herself and others, of falling in love with one of her respondents.

through the writing and reading of ethnographic texts. Ironically, it is the artificiality of ethnographic accounts, crafted through literary conventions, that gives the writing its plausible, just-like-being-there, 'reality-like' effects (Atkinson 1992: 14). Like other cultural products, ethnographic writing is self-referential; existing in dialogue with, and as commentary on, other texts which shape the tradition and sometimes alluding explicitly to moments and features of this tradition. Some recent studies (eg. Dwyer 1982, Lather & Smithies 1997) have attempted to respond to aspects of contemporary social theory by assimilating certain postmodern ideas into the text. The deconstructive mode and the eschewing of grand narratives has resulted in experimental styles of ethnographic writing where fragmentation is favoured over linear narrative and multiple voices preferred to the dominance of authorial presence.

Ethnographies of education

Ethnographic and qualitative approaches in the field of education emerged in Britain from the 1960s (see Atkinson, Delamont & Hammersley 1993). This work can be seen as a rejection of positivistic methods that had been operating previously and an attempt to understand schooling from the perspective of participants. Early ethnographers of education (eg. Hargreaves 1967; Lacey 1970; Willis 1977) embraced social science perspectives such as symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and neo-Marxism, applying them directly to the school context to develop an analysis of social relations in school. In these studies the classroom emerged as a site where conflict, strategies and negotiations were played out in encounters between pupils and teachers. Drawing upon Althusserian concepts, educational researchers began to conceptualise school as a site of struggle within the ideological state apparatus of society (Althusser 1970). This approach generated accounts which called for the relations of schooling to

be viewed as a local manifestation of broader societal relations (Sharp & Green 1975; Bowles & Gintis 1976). Willis' (1977) study *Learning to Labour* provides the most striking example of British ethnographic work from this period. His analysis illustrates the ways in which the experience of schooling for working-class young men in the industrial area of the West Midlands prepared them for manual labour in the local factories. Willis's analysis argued that working-class young males resistance to schooling is not mindless, rather it can be seen an active counter-cultural position based upon a critique of dominant ideology. Willis's approach to ethnographic research and writing is discussed further below.

David Scott (1996) suggests that there are two ways of working with ethnographic material; the *deductive* method which develops theory from the data and the *inductive* which tests pre-given hypotheses through data. My own approach to ethnography is to favour deduction in contexts where the experience of fieldwork gives shape and direction to the research agenda. However, many of the above reflections on ethnographic methods do not engage with the way I feel about the process of *doing* ethnography. Ethnographic work, to me, is an intensely personal experience centrally concerned with relating to people in intimate ways over a sustained period. Defining ethnography in terms of skills and perspectives often overlooks this deep and closely binding engagement which draws upon reserves of emotional and psychic energy. Doing school-based ethnography brings me directly into contact with my own experiences of school - the feelings, smells, embarrassments and confusions of then and now. Memories of my former self collide with the present, often in uncomfortable ways. What kind of pupil I was, who my friends were and how I ended up here rather than anywhere else are reflections inspired by fieldwork (see Hey 1997). Such musing offers the potential for newly-sprung narratives which can be

added to the stock of well-worn tales we tell about ourselves but, importantly, they remind me, if I needed reminding, that identity is a chaotic category which defies settlement. Stephen Ball suggests that it is this process of self-conscious engagement that defines doing ethnography, commenting that it is, 'more like going on a blind-date than going to work' (Ball 1993: 33). The allusion to blind-dating is suggestive of the erotic dimension involved in social encounters where feelings of affinity may also activate feelings of sexual attraction and desire as Cesara (1982) clearly discovered.

Feminist methodologies

Feminist methodologies have played a key part in reconceptualising approaches to knowledge production in the social sciences. As Janet Holland and Caroline Ramazanoglu (1994) point out, a focus on the experience of women's lives challenges the validity of 'objective' masculinist knowledge through the production of alternative accounts of power relations. Holland and Ramazanoglu describe the innovative impact of feminist methods as:

trying to understand the parts that experience, emotion and subjectivity play in the research process, rather than seeing them as weaknesses to be controlled (1994: 130).

Feminist scholarship of the second wave (eg. Oakley 1993; Finch 1984; Stanley & Wise 1983; 1993) have commented on the generative potential of linking personal insights to epistemological perspectives. Within this body of work it is suggested that the shared experience of women in the context of patriarchal relations produces rapport in the research setting which offers the possibility of change and empowerment in women's lives. However,

this empathetic approach developed into a methodological style which became known as feminist standpoint theory (Hill-Collins 1990). As Beverley Skeggs (1995; 1997) has pointed out, the contribution of feminist standpoint theory to epistemic understandings has been to focus attention on the subjects of research and the privileging of their experiences as marginalised others with an awareness of the ways in which forms of oppression operate. The understandings implicit in feminist standpoint theory have been widely problematised by poststructuralist and postmodern perspectives which critique the universalising 'we' of feminist theory. From the perspective of recent social theories unitary categories such as 'woman' cannot be sustained, rather poststructuralist and postmodern insights assert the multiplicity of positionings and identifications in social encounters.

Within feminist ethnography the first-person narrative of women writers can be seen as an 'implicit critique of positivist assumptions and a strategy of communication and self-discovery' (Visweswaran 1994). However, as Visweswaran (1994) points out, the universalising 'we' of feminist ethnography has the effect of erasing issues of power and difference in research settings:

Insisting on the opposition between a unified female self and a male other removes the power categories that exist between all anthropologists and their subjects (1994: 20).

Acknowledging the power differentials between the researcher and the researched calls into question the sisterly assumptions of earlier feminist work and poses new questions for feminists in relation to issues of exploitation. Judith Stacey's (1991) response to the question, *Can there be a feminist ethnography?* concludes that ethnographic methods risk being *more*

manipulative and exploitative than positivist methods which do not seek to achieve rapport and intimacy with research subjects. The implications of Stacey's position leave feminist ethnographers in a methodological cul de sac where field relations become difficult to negotiate and analysis impossible to justify. However, feminist ethnographers such as Visweswaran (1994) Enslin (1994) and Skeggs (1997) suggest that there are possibilities for feminist ethnography where issues of power and exploitation can be addressed, if not resolved. Visweswaran (1994) stresses the importance of experimentation at the level of the text; multiple authorship and the blurring of genres indicate some of the ways in which the ethnographic text can become a site of politics in itself. Enslin (1994), by contrast, offers a more layered account of praxis where forms of accountability and political activism become embedded in research relations and where writing may not be the only end product. Skeggs (1997) indicates that feminist ethnographers can take seriously the notion of providing a representational space for the subjects of their research. Skeggs argues that this involves the development of a political agenda where issues of responsibility and accountability become central.

Feminism and education

The influence of feminism on educational research can be seen in the body of literature on girls and women teachers (see Weiner & Arnot 1987 & Arnot 1999 for an overview of this field). In this literature approaches to gender are treated within the framework of equal opportunities, often following the tropes of earlier studies on social class in education. Feminist inflected studies in education covered issues such as: the educational life chances of girls and boys (Byrne 1978); school as a site for the reproduction of sex-roles and gender identity (Sharpe 1976; Spender & Sarah 1980); gender bias/sexism in the curriculum and text books (Lobban 1975). More recently,

work in this field has focused on the links between gender and sexuality and the ways in which this configuration shapes the lives of young women, both in and out of school. Jones and Mahony (1989) in a collection entitled *Learning Our Lines* point to the sex-gender order inscribed in patriarchal relations as a significant and pervasive feature in the social control of women and girls in school and elsewhere. Other studies (McRobbie & Garber 1982; Griffin 1982; Lees 1986; 1993) suggest that the notion of 'reputation' serves to regulate girls' behaviour. These studies discuss the ways in which young men draw upon patriarchal discourse in contexts where misogynist terms and a concern with female sexual reputations become markers for the appraisal of young women's identities. My study is, of course, indebted to this earlier work and attempts to build upon many insights of feminist educationalists. As noted in chapter 5, I found the notion of sexual reputation to be an abiding feature in the lives of the young women I worked with. However, I also observed that young men could be called 'slag' and were also subject to name-calling and judgmental assessment in peer groups. This may indicate that sexual regulation in the age of HIV / AIDS may be more pervasive among young people generally, rather than specifically focused on the sexual activities of young women. The possibility of a new moral order in the domain of the sexual may suggest to young people that sleeping around and one night stands are undesirable for health reasons rather than as a signifier of 'looseness' and depravity. This theme is returned to in the following chapter.

Auto/biographical methods

Michael Erben (1996) suggests that the purpose of biographical method is 'to explore through the analysis of individual lives, the relationship between social forces and individual character' (1996: 159). For Erben, biographical

method gives researchers access to the unfolding of peoples' lives that can be studied as 'an enacted drama of selfhood' (1996: 159). Erben suggests that a consideration of *how* consciousness is constitutive of self-formation lies at the heart of biographical method.

Auto/biographical methods have been utilised in productive ways by individuals and groups marginalised by dominant forms. Haug et al. (1987) developed the concept of 'memory work' as a method for the generation of personal stories of gendered embodiment which could be told and analysed within the context of a feminist project. In chapter 2, *Fragments from a fading career* I appropriate this method to critically examine my personal investments in teaching and my early interest in sexuality. The Personal Narratives Group (1989) further explore the reading of biographical accounts from a feminist perspective. In *Interpreting Women's Lives* they argue that the use of women's personal narratives offer a challenge to traditional bodies of knowledge, truth and reality that have been constructed as if men's experiences were normative. They suggest that women's personal narratives are capable of illustrating aspects of gender relations which explore the constructions of a gendered self-identity within specific social contexts. The Personal Narratives Group define individual accounts as 'verbal reconstructions of developmental processes' (1989: 5), indicating the interplay of agency and social dynamics in the shaping of gendered identities. Liz Stanley (1987; 1990) considers some of the methodological implications of feminist research and auto/biographical accounts. Stanley (1990) suggests that such work is reflexively concerned with its own production. Moreover, she sees the processes involved in this mode of analysis as problematising the notion of self ; replacing unity and stability with 'an understanding of self as fragile and continually renewed by acts of memory and writing' (1990: 62).

Valerie Walkerdine (1986b) provides an interesting fusion of auto/biographical method and social research in *Video replay: family, films and fantasy*. In this study Walkerdine chronicled her growing involvement with a working-class family she was researching. Her inextricable involvement in aspects of the family's inter-action led Walkerdine to argue persuasively for reflexivity in ethnographic study, specifically for an identification of 'the ethnographer's own position in [the] complex web of power/knowledge/desire' (Walkerdine 1990: 196). In this particular case, that involvement included identification with, and positioning by, a fantasy held by the father of the family. The research encounter produced Walkerdine's identification in this fantasy with a vulnerable form of femininity connected with her own father positioning her as the Tinkerbelle fairy at a certain moment in her childhood. As I have indicated in chapter 1, the work of Valerie Walkerdine has had a generative effect on my thinking and writing during the course of this study. The issues raised in *Video replay* inspired me to develop the reflexive auto/biographical account used in chapter 2 in which I combine memory-work (above) with personal reflections of the early years of my career as a teacher (see chapter 1 for a further discussion of Walkerdine's work).

Within the field of education, biographical methods have provided an insight into the lives and careers of teachers and their relationship to structures of schooling (Sikes, Measor & Woods 1985; Connell 1985; Goodson 1991; 1992). Cortazzi (1993) suggests that, as teachers are the motors of change in education, an understanding of teacher's experiences and perspectives can effect improvement in educational systems, curriculum reform and classroom practice. In a similar vein Connelly and Clandinin (1988) view teachers as holders of personal and practical knowledge which

can be utilised to understand and develop the processes involved in teaching and learning. Further research in this field indicates that teachers' pedagogic practice is shaped by their personal experiences of schooling as former pupils (Goodson 1992; Woods 1985; Wood 1992). I have drawn upon this insight in my analysis of teachers as sex education practitioners (chapter 7). In *Sexing the Subject* I consider teacher's approaches to sex education and relate their experiences as practitioners to aspects of their biography which they discussed in interview. How teachers learned about sex and *became* sexual subjects provided many interesting reflections on the relationship of the past to the present. As pointed out above, I have found auto/biographical methods particularly useful for reflecting on my own investments in researching issues of sexuality and schooling. In *Fragments from a Fading Career* (chapter 1) I offer a reflexive consideration of these themes which suggests that doing research and being researched provide a further site for the enactment of versions of the self. Viewed in this way, social research can be seen as a modern technology producing research subjects who can be 'known' through a dynamic where the research encounter provides a performative space for the creation of versions of the Self (Foucault 1982; Tagg 1980; Tolson 1990).

My study is indebted to the three methodologies developed in the fields of ethnography, feminist theory and auto/biography discussed above. Each approach had provided me with insights and considerations which I have drawn upon during the course of this study. These understandings can be summarised as an abiding concern with issues of reflexivity and experience which value research subjects as knowledge-makers. In the following section I turn, more specifically, to a consideration of myself and my methods. My aim is to develop a reflexive account of the fieldwork process that will address the troubling questions posed at the start of this chapter. I

do not offer a linear account of what I did and why. Rather, I offer a selection of formative moments drawn from the research period which say something about field relationships and the research process.

Tales from the field

Vicky: [to Naomi] So are you going out with him? You like him then? Just tell him you don't wanna go out with him if you don't wanna go out with him. Ohh [in exasperated tone] I don't wanna get involved. Are you recording Miss?

MJK: [nodding] Umm

[girls laugh and put hands to their mouths]

Vicky: [to tape recorder] Helloooo! Right [returning to work] what am I doing now ...

[...]

Vicky: [to tape recorder] My name's not really Vicky. This is Emma, Naomi and Gertrude, they're code names we're using, [in Bond movie-star voice] this is double-o-four, here's my card - oh you can't see it! My name is Vickers, Vicky Vickers.

Emma: Well known as a big mouth.

During the one-year research period myself and my tape recorder became a common sight in the Year 10 class that I observed and studied. Students

soon learned how to set up the tape recorder for themselves, switch it on and off and replay their discussions to shrieks of delight and embarrassment at hearing their voices. Students with whom I conducted research were accepting of my presence as a researcher and the paraphernalia of research in the form of tape recording and note taking. Groups of pupils routinised my research activities by asking me to join 'their group' at certain moments, offering to be interviewed and by helping me load and unload the tape recorder and move it from one classroom to another at the change of lessons. The ease with which I was integrated into the school day by students and accommodated into their networks says something about the power of school mechanisms to socialise students into patterns of behaviour through the routines of timetabling and pedagogic practice.

In many of the interactions I had with students they frequently saw the tape recorder as the 'other' rather than me. Like Vicky, many students asked if they were being recorded even when they knew they were through the ritual of setting up and switching on the machine. And like Vicky, they also draw a distinction between me being there and the tape recorder being on. The responses of students on many occasions suggest that they regard the tape recorder as capable of 'catching' and betraying them, rather than me as the researcher using the tape recorder. The presence of the tape recorder and its conferred status as 'controlling object' can be seen to provide another layer in the multi-layered process of research. In the transcript above the different levels of activity can be defined as: the lesson and the set task; the relationship between Naomi and Nathan; Naomi and the other girls; the girls and the tape recorder; and finally, me and the girls and the tape recorder. During the course of the lesson many of the girls in the group spoke directly into the tape recorder to offer corrective accounts or points of clarification. In the 'double-o-four, here's my card' articulation the tape

recording also serves as a source of fun allowing Vicky to assume a different role and play to an imaginary audience. Through an interaction with the tape recorder Vicky turns her initial concern over confidentiality into a performative space for showing-off, abruptly curtailed in the charge, 'big mouth'.

As noted above, my approach to ethnographic work in school is to see students as meaning-makers, informing and shaping the research agenda in direct ways. Key themes in the thesis such as magazine readership and embodiment were sign-posted by the frequently articulated responses of students I spoke with. During the research period I came to regard pupil peer groups as a significant site for identity production. In peer group interactions students collectively negotiated an acceptable 'line', defining, for that moment, legitimate realms of thought, words and actions. Where possible I discussed accounts of particular incidents with teachers and other students in an attempt to understand events from different perspectives. This approach to qualitative research has been described as triangulation (Denzin 1970) and is often discussed in literature on research methods as a checking procedure for researchers, a way of validating the social world of the field (see Burgess 1991). My approach to triangulation, however, was a little messier. Sometimes it produced counter narratives (as in the Naomi and Nathan romance discussed in chapter 3) and sometimes a particular reading was conferred by various parties (as in the boys and bodily disgust episode of chapter 6). Talking to teachers and other students about particular incidents often raised the possibility of multiple readings rather than a verifiable and conclusive account. This development is reminiscent of Liz Stanley's (1987) study of Henry Mayhew which unfolds to point out, in powerful ways, that things look different depending on where you are looking from.

Poststructuralist insights into the importance of context and contingency in shaping social reality (Weedon 1987) have been instrumental in the construction of this thesis. Recognising that there are *moments* of truth and writing (Stanley 1990) has influenced my approach to data collection and analysis. My approach has not attempted to recreate the reality-effect of field relations produced in a just-like-being-there linear narrative. Neither have I attempted to develop an overview of sexuality and schooling based on empirical observations. Rather, I have looked for *moments* in the transcripts which provide commentaries on the relationship between the domain of the sexual and the domain of the school. Having identified these moments, I began to think of them as *discursive clusters* - instances where ideas and relations are condensed in particular ways. These discursive clusters became, for me, the 'text', the object of analysis which was instructive in pointing me to ways of understanding and interpreting the social encounter. Specifically, my approach to such moments drawn from the transcripts is to treat them as literary text, paying close attention to linguistic features and devices, particular words and phrases and, occasionally, the absences too. I regard speech as a form of action which requires analysis of the act of speaking as well as analysis of what is said. Moreover, I would argue that text produced by ethnographic fieldwork can be viewed and interpreted as a form of social practice. This method of analysis has evolved, in part, from my background as a former student of literature and from my reading of ethnographies such as the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies work on youth sub-cultures (Hall & Jefferson 1976), Paul Willis's early ethnographic work (Willis 1974) and his subsequent school-based study *Learning to Labour* (Willis 1977). In this body of literature I recognised and enjoyed the 'craft' of literary-inspired analysis at work. Willis (1996) has since discussed his ethnographic method as an

elaboration of the close-reading technique employed by his teacher and mentor, Richard Hoggart. Willis describes using this technique to study a Shakespeare sonnet and, later, applying the same technique to culture in his study of a gang of motorbike boys. For Willis this method is a way of documenting the creativity of working class culture which is respectful of lived relations and the experiential as a site for art and artistry.

Talking dirty

‘Would you give a blow-job, Miss?’

‘Would you have a lesbian relationship?’

‘Why are girls so fishy?’

‘What’s your favourite position [for sex], Miss?’

The ways in which students spoke to me about sex involved me in many encounters which provided an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between sexualities and the social context of the school. Students utilised sexuality in a variety of ways in their interactions with teachers and with each other. Among friendship groups the use of sexuality as a resource for humour was common. Students could engage in banter about being gay/lesbian, being a prostitute, willingness to perform sexually or underperformance, choice of boyfriend/girlfriend. These sexualised exchanges provide an insight into the sexist and homophobic practices of pupils to suggest ways in which sexual power is played out in school (Mac an Ghail 1991; Lees 1993). In interactions between teachers and students, however, sexuality could be utilised by students to consolidate pupil cultures and define themselves *as against* teachers (Kehily & Nayak 1996).

Students with whom I worked understood that explicitly sexual comments, couched in colloquial terms, embarrassed teachers and amused other pupils. Students were aware of the power of sexualised comments to violate adult norms and middle-class sensibilities. Some students had developed a sophisticated understanding of these dynamics, expressing an awareness of which sexual references upset which teachers. Skeggs (1991) provides an illustration of the ways in which these dynamics can be underscored by gender in examples where young women use sexuality to disrupt the patriarchal authority of male teachers and the educational establishment. Using sexuality in the classroom, therefore, could become a strategy, utilised by both males and females, for unsettling teacher-pupil relations, providing a moment of triumph and celebration for pupils and humiliation for teachers. In researching issues of sexuality in school was I providing a site for the further enactment of teacher-pupil binaries and intra-pupil rivalries? In the discussion below I attempt to answer this question by describing the ways in which students related to me as a researcher interested in issues of sexuality.

The questions posed at the start of this section are some of the questions that young men asked me during the first few months of fieldwork. Young women in the school also asked some of these questions, however, they usually sought information of a different kind. Young women in the study frequently asked about my personal life (was I married, did I have children, what was my partner like?). Many young women also approached me for specific advice in matters of sexual relationships and contraceptives often articulated in the question, 'Well, what would you do if ...?' The risqué flavour of the boys' questions and the more grounded lifestyle questions of the girls indicates that my presence as researcher was also mediated through the lens of sexually-experienced-woman. The questions of the young

women suggest that they may have, at times, positioned me as an older sister while for young men my presence provided an opportunity for verbal displays of sexual daring. I came to understand these questions as a form of boundary-work; students wanted to know who I was, what I was doing and how they could relate to me. The way I handled their questions gave them some guidelines for positioning me and sometimes prompted further rounds of testing/checking. My response to questions, however, was not always consistent. Depending on the context, I would offer open and direct answers or, on occasions, deflect the question with comments such as, 'I'm not sure', 'What do you think?' I realise in retrospect that I did not want to be positioned as 'teacher', an identity which, as I observe above, could elicit certain responses from pupils, especially in relation to issues of sexuality. Neither did I want to encourage the style of questioning favoured by some young men which could potentially lead to a form of sexual harassment or, at least, a situation where I could be made to feel uncomfortable. I return to the issue of coping with male sex-talk below. I also had to acknowledge and, it was plain for all to see, that I was not a pupil either, regardless of the inclusiveness of peer group cultures in the school. Not being a teacher or a pupil left me vulnerable to questions which could be challenging and difficult as students struggled to place me within some category that made sense to them (see Epstein (1998a) for a further discussion of these themes). A further anxiety for me in establishing field relations was my concern to fit in with school routines; I did not want to offend teachers or create difficulties which would require their intervention. I was aware from my experience as a teacher that talking to pupils about sex in explicit ways can cause alarm and offence. The changing political climate in schools described in chapters 1 and 7 also pointed to the importance of avoiding disruption and negative publicity. The spectre of governing bodies, irate parents and sensational press headlines haunts researchers working in this field and I

was aware that the future of my research project depended on my 'good behaviour' and my efforts to 'keep it clean and keep it safe'. As the research progressed I became aware that my concerns to avoid controversy involved me in the internal scrutiny of self-regulation, itself a form of policing in the domain of the sexual.

Anthony Easthope (1990) suggests that talking dirty and particularly the sharing of 'dirty jokes' between men is an attempt to 'master' women through discourse (1990: 126). The questions and comments of young men in my study could be viewed as an attempt to invoke a form of 'mastery' capable of placing me in a subordinate position to them through the utilisation of a deliberately transgressive sexualised style. As a former teacher of sex education, however, I felt familiar with the ways in which young men talked about sexual issues and was not shocked or offended by 'dirty talk'. Furthermore, I came to understand the 'talking dirty' discourse of young men as a preliminary stage in establishing field relationships. Through jokes, sexualised banter and daring questions, young men collectively contributed to a style of bawdy excess that 'tested' the dynamics of social encounters with others. As a researcher interested in sexualities and schooling, pupil peer groups provided me with a rich and valuable insight into the ways in which young people spoke about and articulated issues of sexuality. I came to understand these exchanges as constitutive of informal sexual cultures within the school. As field relations developed the sex-talk of students provided me with access into their perspectives and also opened up a space for me where sexual themes could be pursued in interviews and groupwork discussions. Over a period of time the boundary-work questions waned and gave way to more considered discussions of gender/sexual themes which I explore in chapter 6.

While I indicate above that field relationships became comfortable and productive with time, I feel that I relive moments of discomfort and anxiety when I present aspects of my thesis at seminars and conferences. In this context I frequently feel that I am talking dirty to large numbers of people I hardly know and, on occasions, my presentation has caused offence to others. This response, as far as I can tell, has been prompted by the sexually explicit language used in ethnographic extracts. One conference participant expressed a feeling of 'shock' and asked, 'Do young people really say such things?' This incident illustrates some of the difficulties of talking about sexuality in school and beyond. Firstly, there is the difficulty of transporting the intimacy of field encounters into another setting and, secondly there is the issue of language. Holland & Ramazanoglu (1994) discuss the absence of a language for young people with which to describe sexuality, sexual behaviour and particularly female sexuality. They point to the inadequacies of available discourses which either draw upon medical/clinical terms or language which is regarded as obscene and crude. Lees (1994) makes a similar point in her study of sex talk in sex education which highlights the gendered inequalities inherent in discussions of sexuality. The final section of this chapter outlines some of the issues I encountered in developing an analysis drawn from ethnographic methods. Being guided by the responses of students involved me in interpretive techniques which seemed to call for the eclectic appropriation of different theoretical frameworks. In the following section I discuss some of the issues generated by interdisciplinary approaches and focus particularly on the seemingly contradictory combination of poststructuralist and psychoanalytic frameworks.

Discourses and the unconscious

My approach to ethnographic work in school, noted earlier, involved seeing students as meaning-makers, actively engaged in making sense of their

world. This in turn involved me in paying close attention to the words and actions of students and attempting to understand them from their perspective. Theoretical ideas and frameworks used in the study have been suggested to me by student responses and represent my attempt to elaborate upon and develop the interpretative stance of participants. However, I am also aware that I enter the field with prior knowledges drawn from my reading and past experiences. Inevitably I 'favour' certain ideas rather than others and look to particular ways of developing the analysis based on my theoretical position. A framework that was in place for me before and during fieldwork was poststructuralism. Identifying the discourses at play in social encounters seemed, to me, a generative approach to apply to ethnographic methods.

The concept of discourse derives from the work of Foucault (1973; 1976; 1977; 1980) and his interest in the construction of truth and its effect on our lives. Foucault's study of institutions suggests to us that we construct our subjectivities from culturally and historically specific discourses. For Foucault, discourses developed in fields such as religion and medicine produce 'regimes of truth', particular sets of concepts which delineate what can be spoken/known and what must be left unspoken. Foucault uses the term 'power-knowledge' to suggest the ways in which knowledge as 'truth' becomes important to the legitimacy of a particular discourse. Discourses present themselves as knowledgeable and powerful ways of positioning the individual and, simultaneously, provide a structure in which they can position themselves and others. Working with Foucault's notion of discourse I was able to identify salient discourses within the school such as the discourse of the official curriculum and the moral discourse mobilised in sex education. In Chapter 3 I develop my application of a Foucaultian framework to the institution of the school. This interpretation is based on a

close reading of *History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (1976) and suggests that the school can be seen as a discursive site where power can be seen in terms of, both, regulation and creative resistance - a recurrent theme of the study. The Foucaultian concept of 'bio-power' also became particularly significant during the period of analysis. Foucault uses the term 'bio-power' as a form of social control which, at the level of the individual, involves a knowledge of, and power over, gestures, movements, location and behaviours of the body. As a localised form of power bio-power can be seen to produce 'docile' bodies through institutionalised practices and controlled bodies through self-regulation. I have used these insights to approach issues of embodiment in school, particularly in Chapter 6.

Further poststructuralist insights were suggested to me by Henriques et al 's (1984) study *Changing the Subject*. In this work the notion of 'investment' is used to offer ways of theorising subjective affiliations; what makes an individual take up a position in one discourse rather than another. This led me into thinking about the realm of subjectivity and the spaces that may be bracketed out by discourse analysis. In some instances, particularly in relation to my analysis of 'agony aunts' and issues of embodiment (chapters 4 & 6), I felt that I had exhausted the discursive possibilities yet there was still much more left to say. It was in situations such as these that I turned to psychoanalytic theories. Jacqueline Rose asserts that psychoanalysis examines what '*insists* on being spoken rather than what is *allowed* to be said' (1986: 86, original italics). The recognition within psychoanalysis that repressed desires speak through the subject provided me with further resources to analyse the text. Furthermore, psychoanalytic theories offer a purchase on subjectivity which I found instructive in many ways.

Psychoanalytic theories suggest that gendered subjectivity is central to identity, precarious (Freud 1977), not easily achieved and ever incomplete

(Rose 1986). I appreciate that the two frameworks of poststructuralism and psychoanalysis are not necessarily complementary; the cultural and historical specificity of discourses may be seen as in opposition to the generalised principles of subjectivity in psychoanalysis, often postulated in terms of infant development and family dynamics. However, for the purposes of my study discourse analysis provided an overarching framework, while psychoanalysis offered ways of exploring the internal landscape of subjectivity and the contradictory positioning of subjects.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to develop an account of the research process and to reflect upon the methodologies I used and the subsequent development of an analysis of sexuality and schooling. The chapter begins with a discussion of the three main methodologies I have drawn upon during the course of the study. My discussion of each methodology points to the substantive theoretical and methodological issues that have informed my approach to this study and to which I remain indebted. This discussion is followed by an outline of what I actually did during the fieldwork period. In the section entitled *Talking dirty* I discuss some of the issues I encountered in researching sexuality in school contexts. The title and the discussion is an attempt to capture and explore some of the feelings of excitement, challenge and anxiety I experienced through my involvement in this work. Finally, this chapter discusses some of the implications of drawing upon the different and contradictory frameworks of poststructuralism and psychoanalysis. In the next and final chapter of the thesis I aim to summarise the main themes of the study and suggest ways in which these themes can be drawn upon in approaches to sex education and further research in this field.

CHAPTER 9

Sexuality and Schooling Reconsidered: notes towards a conclusion

Introduction

The last chapter considered the methodological implications of researching sexuality in schools. In order to explore these issues I provided an account of some key theoretical concerns raised by the three main methodologies I have used throughout this thesis. This was followed by my personal reflections on the fieldwork process and the difficulties and dilemmas I encountered while engaging in research in this field. Overall, the last chapter offered an outline of my methodological and theoretical approach to fieldwork followed by an account of what I did in the field and the ways in which this combination produced a particular analysis. Issues of validity were discussed in terms of my central approach to praxis which regarded students as knowledge-producers who were actively engaged in understanding the social world in which they find themselves. In this final chapter I will summarise and conclude my ethnographic account of sexuality and school relations. This summary will be organised into four sections: firstly, a discussion of the main research findings; secondly, the implications of these findings for teaching and learning in the field of sex education; thirdly, some personal reflections on the research project which draw upon the experience with the advantage of hindsight; and finally, the implications of my findings for future research and praxis in relation to issues of sexuality and schooling.

Summary of the research findings

In this section I will begin by summarising the research findings as they were developed in the chapters of the thesis. The introductory chapter

signalled my theoretical position in relation to issues of sexuality and schooling and also introduced, in brief, some biographical details to make explicit my interest and personal experience in relation to the focus of my study. The introduction recounted a personal 'moment' in which I realised that talking about and teaching issues located within the domain of the sexual caused concern and anxiety for senior staff in the school. My initial response was a mixture of curiosity and bewilderment; why had my teaching of sex education bothered the headteacher so much and why was I treated in such a high-handed manner? I suggested that this moment was formative in the development of my interest in a field which was later to become an academic pursuit. Chapter 1 introduced my intention to bring together different bodies of literature in my analysis of sexuality and schooling in order to provide a context for the empirical work. These bodies of literature draw upon theorists working within socio-historical approaches and psychoanalytic approaches to understanding human sexuality. Chapter 1 provided an overview of this work and, importantly, set out my aim to combine poststructuralist insights on discourse and power relations with psychoanalytic theories on the formation of subjectivity and psychic processes in my analysis of sexual cultures in school. As noted in that chapter, I developed this approach in order to suggest that an understanding of psychic dynamics at the level of the Subject may also help us to understand social relationships. My approach to the relationship between the world of the unconscious and the world of the social, demonstrated throughout the thesis, builds upon the work of contemporary theorists and particularly that of Valerie Walkerdine. The introductory chapter discussed Walkerdine's work in detail and pointed to the generative impact of her writing on my thinking and, in turn, the shaping of this study. In this introductory chapter I also signalled my interest in heterosexuality as a focus for study and analysis. I noted that the concern with heterosexuality as a

dominant sexual category has been inspired by recent debates in the field of sexuality and particularly my engagement with queer theory. Finally, the introductory chapter highlighted my intention that the study would contribute to academic debate and practitioner knowledge in the field of sexuality and schooling and outlined an emergent body of work in this area which the thesis is both connected to and in dialogue with.

Chapter 2, *Fragments from a fading career*, presented further biographical moments which elaborated upon my personal investments in ideas and issues informing this study. Using the concept of 'memory-work' (Haug et al. 1987) as a research method and a mode of analysis, the chapter indicated the ways in which my early experiences as a teacher shaped my approach to school relations and the sphere of the sexual within the school. The personal narratives presented in this chapter illustrated some of my investments in ideas of radical pedagogy which were internalised and continually struggled over. The chapter pointed to the complex relationship between unconscious dynamics at the level of the individual and their engagement with external social structures - a recurrent theme of the thesis. In *Fragments from a fading career* the object of analysis is myself, the development of my pedagogic practice and the shaping of my research agenda. The reflexive account developed in this chapter makes explicit the ways in which personal experience can be seen as an integral part of research activity. Chapter 2, therefore, aimed to offer an insight into both how I came to be personally invested in the research and how the research can be seen as the product of these investments. In chapters 7 and 8 I returned to themes of biography and the personal: firstly, to look at teachers and their pedagogic practice; and secondly, to consider these themes in relation to the methodological issues informing the study. Aspects of life history method are used ^{to} study teaching as an activity which is intimately connected with personal

experience in conscious and unconscious ways.

In Chapter 3, *Producing heterosexualities: the school as a site of discursive practices* I introduced Foucaultian theories and applied them to the study of education through an analysis which argued that schools can be viewed as sites of discursive practice in relation to sexuality. *Producing heterosexualities* aimed to provide an interpretive frame for looking at the field of sexuality and schooling and, additionally, as a way of reading this and subsequent chapters. Specifically, the chapter developed the aforementioned focus on heterosexuality to point to the ways in which the school produced heterosexualities through the everyday activity of school-based practice in different discursive spaces. *Producing heterosexualities* identified and discussed three sites of discursive practice where versions of heterosexuality were invoked and naturalised: the official curriculum; pedagogic practice; and informal pupil cultures. The approach developed in this chapter involved making heterosexualities plural and understanding and addressing them as discursive formations defined in relation to each other. The later part of the chapter which focused on informal school relations introduced ethnographic material drawn from fieldwork I conducted as part of this study. Issues of pedagogy were discussed with reference to a teacher of Personal and Social Education whom I observed, interviewed and with whom I built up a relationship with during my time in the school. Similarly, informal pupil cultures were approached through ethnographic accounts gathered in the same school. Ethnographic evidence discussed at this point indicated that the production of heterosexualities in school can be seen as a gendered project in which young women and young men were positioned in particular ways. The chapter points out the ways in which asymmetrical power relations involved in issues of gender have the effect of positioning young women as objects of male sexual power and also as carriers of a

potentially dangerous and disruptive feminine sexuality. The discussion of female sexuality in relation to Naomi introduced the theme of embodiment as an important feature of sex-gender enactments and one which was returned to in chapter 6. The three sites of discursive practice discussed in chapter 3 highlight a key feature of the study, that of pupils as active subjects who produced sex-gender identities out of specific discursive strategies. The chapter pointed to the ways in which pupil agency in the domain of the sexual operated as a counterpoint to discourses of sexuality in the official curriculum and in classroom practice.

Chapter 4, *Agony Aunts and Absences: an analysis of a sex education class*, developed and extended the approach to pupil cultures introduced in the previous chapter. Through an analysis of one sex education lesson, the chapter identified and discussed issues which were raised by pupils in the course of the lesson. Furthermore, the chapter explored the difficulties of sex education as a practice. The analysis developed in this chapter provided an example of the approach outlined above in which I bring together the use of discourse analysis with psychoanalytic theories. In *Agony Aunts* I argued that the classroom task, the act of writing a fictitious letter to a fictitious problem page can, in itself, be seen to open up a space for the projection of fears and desires. The treatment of the themes raised by pupils in this context utilised discursive explanations alongside psychoanalytic interpretations to explore the ways in which sexuality can be seen as an expression of psychic and social processes. This approach developed our understanding of sexuality as viewed and experienced by young people in school, rather than from the adult-centred perspectives of reproduction and restraint discussed in chapter 3. An emergent theme in chapter 4 was the use of popular culture by young women as a resource for the articulation of sexual matters. I indicated that the language of teenage magazines in

particular provided young women with a discourse which they could appropriate in creative ways as a form of *expertise* which linked verbal competence with femininity. This way of looking at popular culture - as a cultural resource for thinking and speaking the sexual - was further explored in the following chapter.

Accordingly, chapter 5 developed an analysis of teenage magazines based upon ethnographic evidence and a closely-worked textual reading of the magazines themselves. This chapter, *More Sugar? Teenage magazines, gender displays and sexual learning* argued that students' engagement with teenage magazines produced *gender displays*; spaces through which versions of masculinities and femininities could be constituted and publicly performed. The chapter identified the importance of the same-sex peer group in the negotiation and enactment of sex-gender identities. Based upon observations of and interviews with friendship groups the chapter pointed to clear gender differences in the ways students related to, used and spoke of the magazines. I argued that, for young women, there was a relationship between magazine readership and the enactment of feminine identities. Young men, however, did not share the same relationship with teenage magazines and, in discussions, actively resisted the discursive skills and sexual information provided by sustained engagement with the magazine format. This led me to ask questions about how young men in school fashioned and performed their masculine identities - in what contexts and using which resources? These issues were addressed and explored in chapter 6.

As noted above, issues of masculinity became the focus for chapter 6 which was based upon my discussions with groups of young men in school. This chapter *Understanding masculinities: young men, heterosexuality and*

embodiment demonstrated the ways in which young men constituted and consolidated their sex-gender identities. The chapter argued that heterosexuality was incorporated into the masculine repertoire by young men through notions of activity and performance which directly involved the male body. Practices young men engaged in such as sex-talk, masturbation and pornography were discussed in order to develop an analysis of young men's investments in versions of heterosexuality and masculinity. I suggested that these practices could be fused in ways that displayed competence and conferred status within the male peer group. *Understanding masculinities* further argued that young men attempted to *consolidate* their particular heterosexual masculine identities in another realm of activity, that of sexual relationships with women. In the many discussions I conducted with young people during the course of the study, the most surprising feature of these exchanges for me was the way that these young men referred to their bodies as objects of disgust and loathing. The chapter developed an analysis of these expressions through the utilisation of Kristeva's theory of 'abjection'. The chapter built upon this analysis to discuss other ways in which young men attempted to define their identities in relations to a range of Others. Firstly, the Others of homophobic discourse, real and imagined, were discussed in ways that pointed to the psychic dynamics involved in this encounter. Secondly, the chapter discussed young men's relationship to the domain of the feminine, and particularly female sexuality, in terms of fear and desire. The discussion, which drew upon young men's engagement with popular cultural forms, argued that female sexuality can become the object of fascination, fear and repulsion at different moments. Finally, chapter 6 discussed issues of sexual reputation and 'race' to further explore the relationship between masculinity and other social categories. The chapter concluded that young men were concerned to perform and maintain a dominant heterosexual masculinity in

order to protect themselves from potentially emasculating experiences routinely encountered in the social sphere.

In chapter 7 I turned the research gaze away from the realm of informal pupil cultures and towards the culture of teachers and sex education practitioners. The chapter *Sexing the Subject: teachers, pedagogies and sex education* noted the ways that pupil cultures were shaped and played out *in relation* to the culture of teachers and the dominant values of the school. The focus on teachers, moreover, aimed to consider the ways in which they think about and relate to issues of sexuality and the implications of this for their pedagogic practice. The chapter outlined and discussed different literatures on teacher cultures which offered diverse perspectives on teaching and teacher identities. Auto/biographical and life history methods were used once again in order to document and study the personal narratives of individual teachers as they presented an account of themselves as pedagogues and former pupils. The accounts generated in interviews with teachers indicated that it is possible to identify connections between personal experience and pedagogic practice, especially in approaches to sex education. The analysis of this material, however, suggested that these points of connection may be haphazard and may manifest themselves in ways that cannot always be anticipated. The main argument developed in *Sexing the Subject* pointed to the limitations of policy in the field of sex education and the difficulties of outlining a model for teaching and learning in this area of the curriculum. The chapter concluded by placing emphasis on the need for 'good practice' to emerge organically from a contingency of local factors which cannot necessarily be identified at the level of policy.

Chapter 8 considered issues of methodology raised by this study. The chapter outlined and discussed the three main research methodologies used

in the study: ethnographic; feminist; and auto/biographical. The discussion considered the ways in which educational researchers had appropriated these methods and, additionally, my position in relation to these methodological issues. This was followed by an account of the research process which made explicit what I did and how I did it. The discussion documented moments in the progress of the study from field relations to writing-up and analysis through the inclusion of some ethnographic material which was used to address the dynamics of encounter and engagement that emerged during the research period. My approach to ethnographic text and analysis is discussed in terms which I described as the application of a literary-inspired method to *discursive clusters*. The chapter also included some responses that I had received to my presentation of the work at conferences and seminars. These reactions were included to underline the 'controversial' status of this work both in the school setting and beyond and to illustrate the difficulties associated with language, intimacy and context in this area of research. Chapter 8 concluded with a discussion of the different theoretical frameworks used in the analysis of ethnographic material, particularly the apparently contradictory use of poststructuralist ideas and psychoanalytic theories.

The above summarised the research as it was developed throughout the thesis and pointed to the main finding of the project: the importance of the same-sex peer group in the production of sex-gender identities. Overall, the chapters highlighted the significance of peer group interactions to the collective enactment of masculinities, femininities and their relationship to the sexual. The key argument of the thesis remains the activity and agency of pupil cultures in the regulation and performance of gendered heterosexualities. Through exchanges in friendship groups in school, young men and young women learn about sex and *do* gender. This way of looking

illustrated the ways in which sexuality, as produced and experienced by students in school, is discursively tied to gender in the enactment of masculinities and femininities. Chapters 4, 5, and 6, in particular, pointed to the ways in which the acquisition of sexual knowledge and the enactment of gender was in dialogue with popular cultural forms such as teenage magazines, television programmes and pornographic representations. Furthermore, the analysis of pupil peer groups stressed the inter-relationship of psychic and social processes to collectively generated versions of sex-gender identities which valorised forms of heterosexuality while deprecating forms of homosexuality.

Implications for the practice of sex education

The main findings of the thesis relating to pupil peer groups and their engagement with popular culture have implications for teaching and learning in the field of sex education. Some of these implications have been discussed in the main body of the thesis. In this section, however, I aim to bring together issues and ideas which suggest routes for the development of sex education as a pedagogic practice. Chapter 4 pointed to the gender differentiated ways in which students utilised popular culture in the articulation of sexual themes. The chapter indicated that the style and language of teenage magazines could provide a popular and productive resource for teaching sex education. Young women enjoyed the magazine format and appropriated the discourse of these magazines in positive ways. Young men, however, were not so comfortable with the use of teen magazines and did not participate in the sex education lesson as readily and enthusiastically as girls. This indicates that teachers may have to devise other strategies to encourage the participation of boys. Chapter 5 further explored the resistance of young males to teenage magazines and pointed to the potentially emasculating effect of sustained engagement with a form

which they considered to be 'feminine'. Issues of emasculation for young men involved a rejection and disavowal of the feminine which was connected with their fears of being gay/being perceived as gay. This calls for strategies within sex education and social learning more generally which can address issues of gender and sexual diversity. The development of such strategies could explore issues of sex-gender identity and gender appropriate behaviour in critical ways which engage with young peoples insecurities and anxieties in this area.

The thesis illustrates the ways in which engagement with popular cultural forms in educational spheres is not necessarily progressive. *More Sugar?* pointed to the ways in which young women utilised teenage magazines to regulate discussion within the female peer group. The chapter also indicated that the treatment of gay themes and issues of sexual diversity within the magazines tended to rely ^{on} dominant ways of looking and did not challenge stereotypes or discriminatory practices in this area. *Understanding masculinities* (chapter 6) discussed young men's engagement with popular cultural forms and suggested that pornography could be used to establish differences *between* male and shape desirable versions of heterosexual masculinity. The chapter also discussed young men's views on gender relations based on their readership of contemporary television programmes which played with and new feminine subjectivities. Analysis of these practices indicated that young men could use popular culture to recuperate traditional heterosexual masculinities. The social practices of young men and women in relation to popular cultural forms indicates that using popular culture in sex education is not, in itself, desirable or productive. While popular culture has the power to engage young people, the forms of engagement may not necessarily enhance sexual learning. It is in this area that researchers and practitioners could collaborate to develop models and

approaches to sex education which could be used in the classroom.

In chapter 6 the theme of embodiment examined in the analysis of young men's responses has further implications for pedagogic practice. Chapter 6 indicated that sex-gender identities are lived in and through the body.

Within the context of the official school, bodily expressions tend to be confined to sport, dress and the occupation of physical space. Interviews with young men suggested that their concerns with the body were a little different. While grounded in the experience of physicality, the comments of those young men suggest that bodily experiences extend into the realm of the senses. Young men indicated that the sensory experiences of touch and smell become significant in relation to their own bodies and the bodies of women with whom they have sexual relationships. This adds a further dimension to the 'missing discourse of desire' in sex education identified by Michelle Fine (1988). The theme of embodiment analysed in this chapter points to the difficult yet important task of addressing issues of pleasure, desire and disgust in discussions of sexuality with young people. The main findings relating to practice noted in chapter 7 concerned the role of teachers in the implementation of sex education programmes. The chapter suggested that teachers who achieved some measure of success in this area of the curriculum were secure in their identity as 'teacher', were well liked by pupils, had an understanding of the local community and, moreover, saw themselves as part of the local culture of the school and its community. The chapter also drew attention to the insight that female teachers of sex education were the former 'good girls' who had survived schooling with their reputations untarnished and their femininity enhanced by *not becoming pregnant*. This has implications for the practice of sex education and the messages of caution contained therein, specifically aimed at young women. It is possible that models of peer education, such as those used in drugs

education, could broaden the message in this respect by incorporating moral issues into discussions which focus on the experiential with people of a similar age-group.

The research in retrospect

Looking back on the research project as a whole I am aware of certain issues arising from my praxis. A point of tension in the thesis as a whole is my approach to issues of the individual and the collective. In retrospect I realise that I researched teachers as individuals and students as groups. This had an effect both on the research methods I used and the material that was generated. Life history and auto/biographical methods utilised in my study of teachers inevitably produced teachers centrally as individual Subjects defined in relation to themselves and their history. Students, however, were studied in groups within the classroom and in group interviews and discussions. This approach had the effect of producing and defining students collectively as groups involved in mutual activities of regulation and display. It could be argued, in my defence, that my approach draws upon my own experiences as a teacher which recognised the need to pursue the complexities of teacher identity as the ever-incomplete struggle of psychic and social processes. However, it could also be argued from a critical perspective that the individual-collective couplet which I do not decentre is one way in which dominant relations of schooling can be maintained and reproduced. In this respect critical reflections on my approach can define it, contrary to my aims (and my politics), as adult-centred. In retrospect I recognise the need for greater flexibility and feel that the project would have benefited from individual interviews with students and group interviews with teachers. This may have provided an insight into schooling relations and issues of subjectivity which have, thus far, been overlooked.

A further consideration in relation to the above arises from my treatment of pupils as collectivities engaged in the production of sex-gender identities. My analysis indicates that salient versions of masculinity and femininity are negotiated and promoted within same-sex peer groups. However, this can have the effect of perpetuating some of the features I aim to critique. In relation to masculinity, my concerns are summarised by Pattman et al. (1998):

The danger is that research becomes so preoccupied with the ways boys aggressively and competitively assert themselves that it fails to acknowledge the possibilities of 'softer', less polarized and more 'transgressive' masculine identities, except as subordinate masculinities in opposition to which hegemonic masculinities are always enacted (Pattman, Frosh & Phoenix 1998: 140).

In defining collective investments in sex and gender within the peer group I may have overlooked individuals who do not subscribe to the regulatory boundaries of dominant groups within the school and who may, in their own ways, be creatively shaping sex-gender identities in positive terms.

Conclusion: Implications for further research

In this final section of the chapter I shall make some suggestions with regard to further research into sexuality and schooling. The theme of reputation discussed in the thesis may suggest the emergence of a new moral order in matters of sexual behaviour and sexual activity alongside the persistent presence of more traditional forms. While many of the gender inequalities identified by earlier studies persist, it is possible that young people may be

changing their attitude and behaviour to sex in the light of HIV / AIDS and a changing sexual climate. Derogatory terms usually reserved for young women with a reputation for sexual 'looseness' could also be applied to young men who boasted about and engaged in casual sex. Most young people I spoke with, male and female, viewed sexual promiscuity in negative terms as risky, potentially damaging and anti-liberatory. One-night-stands were regarded as extraordinary rather than routine and there was some hint that the moralism implied in these positions was taking on a new form, as distinct from pre 1960s notions of propriety. Obviously, I would not want to make any claims on the basis of these comments but I was struck by the difference between their expressions and my own early experiences of sexual activity in the 1970s. Further research in this field could build upon the insights of existing studies to explore the sexual behaviour of young people and the social meanings they ascribe to sexual encounters and relations of intimacy.

The theme of embodiment discussed in the light of interviews with young men also indicates that further research in this field could be productive in developing our understanding of young people and sexuality. Young men's expressions of disgust in relation to their own bodies was an unexpected dimension that I stumbled upon, almost by accident, quite late into the fieldwork period. Recent social theory has explored issues of embodiment in terms of the symbolic significance of the body in contemporary thought (see Featherstone, Hepworth & Turner 1991). Further research in this field could apply some of these ideas to a study of young people in school, as yet unexplored in this literature. Another fruitful area of enquiry in relation to themes of embodiment and sexuality could be the further use of psychoanalytic insights. I found Kristeva's theory of abjection particularly generative in developing an analysis of young men's expressions of bodily

disgust. More widespread use of psychoanalytic theories in this field could produce interesting accounts of psycho-social processes. This method could also be pursued in relation to issues of femininity and embodiment. Susan Bordo's (1993) cultural analysis of feminism and the body suggests that women in contemporary Western societies learn the rules for the construction of femininity directly through bodily discourse:

through images that tell us what clothes, body shape, facial expressions, movements and behaviour are required ... women must develop a totally other-oriented emotional economy (Bordo 1993: 170-1).

My research has not considered this aspect of contemporary femininity which I regard as a complementary approach to the one developed in this thesis and one which could be explored in further school-based work. My discussions with young people in school also point to the potential for further work in the field of 'race' and sexuality which could draw upon emergent work on new ethnicities (Nayak 1997) which include seeing the responses of white respondents as racially informed accounts.

Finally, I would suggest that there is a need to translate research findings and insights in relation to sexuality and schooling into practitioner orientated accounts which could be used as resources for teaching and learning as part of the PSE curriculum. While I have suggested some of the implications for practice in this field above, I recognise that the development of pedagogic strategies needs time, thought and active support. Producing resources for use by practitioners is, in itself, a project which deserves attention and sponsorship.

APPENDIX A

Transcription code

... refers to short pause

- refers to change in direction, break or interruption

[...] refers to a section of the data which is omitted

[laughs] refers to verbal expressions which are connected with speech

[*demonstrating*] refers to non-verbal actions and body language connected with speech

(to Naomi) provides clarification of words and actions

[unclear] refers to word or passage which is inaudible

with emphasis refers to that which is said with emphasis

APPENDIX B

(following page)

Position of the fortnight, from More!, Issue 206, 14 - 27 February 1996,
publisher EMAP Elan

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Contents refers to :

**Position of the fortnight, from More!, Issue 206,14 - 27 February 1996,
publisher EMAP Elan**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adam, B.D. (1998) Theorising homophobia, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 387-404.

Aggleton, P., Homans, H. & Warwick, I. (1989) Health education, sexuality and aids, in S. Walker & L. Walker (eds.) *Politics and the Processes of Schooling*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Alderson, C. (1968) *Magazines Teenagers Read*, London: Pergamon Press.

Alloway, N. & Gilbert, P. (1997) Boys and literacy: lessons from Australia, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 49-59.

Althusser, L. (1970) Ideology and ideological state apparatuses, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, London: New Left Books.

Altman, M. (1984) Everything they always wanted you to know: the ideology of popular sex, in C. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.

Alyson, S. (ed.) (1980) *Young, Gay and Proud*, Boston MA: Alyson Publications.

Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities, reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, London: Verso.

Anyon, J. (1981) Social class and school knowledge, *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol. 11, no. 1.

Anyon, J. (1983) Intersections of gender and class: accommodation and resistance by working class and affluent females to contradictory sex-role ideologies, in S. Walker & L. Barton (eds.) *Gender, Class & Education*, Lewes: Falmer Press.

Apple, M. (1979) *Ideology and Curriculum*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Atkinson, P. (1990) *The Ethnographic Imagination, textual constructions of reality*, London: Routledge.

Atkinson, P. (1992) *Understanding Ethnographic Texts*, London: Sage.

Atkinson, P., Delamont, S. & Hammersley, M. (1993) Qualitative research traditions, in M. Hammersley (ed.) *Educational Research, current issues*, London; Paul Chapman.

Arnot, M. (1999) *Voices in Gender and Education*, Keynote address given at Voices in Gender and Education conference, University of Warwick.

Ball, S.J. (1981) *Beachside Comprehensive*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ball, S.J. (1987) *The Micro-Politics of the School*, London: Methuen.
- Ball, S.J. (1990) *Politics and Policy Making in Education, explorations in policy sociology*, London: Routledge.
- Ball, S.J. (1993) Self-doubt and soft data: social and technical trajectories in ethnographic fieldwork, in M. Hammersley (ed.) *Educational Research: current issues*, London: Paul Chapman.
- Ball, S.J. & Goodson, I. (1985) *Teachers' Lives and Careers*, London: Falmer.
- Barker, M. (1981) *The New Racism, Conservatism and the Ideology of the Tribe*, London: Junction Books.
- Barker, M. (1989) *Comics, ideology, power and the critics*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Barrs, M. (ed.) (1973) *Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Benton, M. & Benton, P. (eds.) (1971) *Touchstones 5, a teaching anthology*, Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Bland, L. (1995) *Banishing the Beast, English feminism and sexual morality 1885 - 1915*, London: Penguin.
- Bordo, S. (1993) *Unbearable Weight, feminism, Western culture and the body*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986) *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*, London: Routledge.
- Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bristow, J. (1997) *Sexuality*, London: Routledge.
- Britzman, D. (1995) 'What is this thing called love?' *Taboo, journal of culture and education*, Vol. 1, pp. 65 - 93.
- Brooks, A. (1997) *Postfeminisms: feminism, cultural theory and cultural forms*, London: Routledge.
- Bubandt, N. (1998) The odour of things: smell and the cultural elaboration of disgust in Eastern Indonesia, *Ethnos, Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 63, no. 1, pp. 48-80.
- Burgess, R.G. (ed.) (1991) *Field Research: a Sourcebook and Field Manual*, London: Routledge.
- Burgin, V. (1990) Geometry and abjection, in J. Fletcher & A. Benjamin (eds.) *Abjection, Melancholia and Love: the work of Julia Kristeva*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble, feminism and the subversion of identity*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter: on the discursive limits of 'sex'*, London: Routledge.

Byrne, E. (1978) *Women and Education*, London: Tavistock.

Cameron, D. & Frazer, E. (1996) The murderer as misogynist? in S. Jackson & S. Scott (eds.) *Feminism and Sexuality, a Reader*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Canaan, J. (1986) Why a 'slut' is a 'slut': cautionary tales of middle class teenage girls' morality, in H. Varenne (ed.) *Symbolising America*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Carson, D.L. (1992) Ideological conflict and change in the sexuality curriculum, in J. Sears (ed.) *Sexuality and the Curriculum, the politics and practice of sexuality education*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1982) *Making Histories*, London: Hutchinson.

Cesara, M. (1982) *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist: no hiding place*, London: Academic Press.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (eds.) (1986) *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cohen, A.K. (1955) *Delinquent Boys: the culture of the gang*, Chicago: Free Press.

Comfort, A. (ed.) (1974) *The Joy of Sex, a gourmet guide to lovemaking*, London: Quartet.

Connell, R.W. (1985) *Teachers' Work*, Sydney: George Allen & Unwin.

Connell, R.W. (1987) *Gender and Power, society, the person and sexual politics*, Cambridge: Polity.

Connell, R.W. (1989) Cool guys, swots and wimps: the interplay of masculinity and education, *Oxford Review of Education*, 13, pp. 291-303.

Connell, R.W. (1995) *Masculinities*, London: Polity.

Connelly, F.M. & Clandinin, D.J. (1988) *Teachers as Curriculum Planners: narratives of experience*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Cooper, D. (1994) *Sexing the City: Lesbian and Gay Politics within the Activist State*, London: Rivers Oram Press.

Cortazzi, M. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, London: Falmer Press.

- Coward, R. (1984) *Female Desire*, London: Paladin.
- Cowie, C. & Lees, S. (1987) Slags or drags? in Feminist Review (ed.) *Sexuality: a reader*, London: Virago.
- Davies, B. (1983) The role pupils play in the social construction of classroom order, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 55-69.
- Davies, B. (1997) Constructing and deconstructing masculinities through critical literacy, *Gender and Education*, Vo. 9, no. 1, pp. 9-30.
- Denzin, N.K. (1970) *The Research Act*, Chicago: Aldine.
- Department of Health (1992) *Health of the Nation: a strategy for health in England*, London: HMSO.
- de Sade, D.A.F. (1993) *The Passionate Philosopher, A Marquis de Sade Reader*, M. Crossland (ed.), trans. M. Crossland, London: Minerva.
- Donald, J. (1985) Beacons of the future: schooling, subjection and subjectification, in Veronica Beechey & James Donald (eds.) *Subjectivity and Social Relations*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Dollimore, J. (1991) *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Dreyfus, H.L. & Rabinow, P. (1982) *Michel Foucault, beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Dworkin, A. (1981) *Our Blood: prophecies and discourses on sexual politics*, New York: G.P. Putnam.
- Dwyer, K. (1982) *Moroccan Dialogues: anthropology in question*, Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Dyer, R. (1993) *The Matter of Images: essays on representation*, London: Routledge.
- Easthope, A. (1990) *What a Man's Gotta Do, the masculine myth in popular culture*, Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- Edwards, T. (1998) Queer Fears: against the cultural turn, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 4, pp 471-483.
- Ellsworth, E. (1994) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the oppressive myths of critical pedagogy, in Lynda Stone (ed.) *The Education Feminism Reader*, London: Routledge.
- Epstein, D. (ed.) (1994) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. (1996) Keeping them in their place: hetero/sexist harassment, gender and the enforcement of heterosexuality, in L. Adkins & J. Holland (eds.) *Sexualising the Social*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Epstein, D. (1997) Boyz' Own Stories: masculinities and sexualities in schools, *Gender & Education*, Vol.9, no. 1, pp. 105-115.

Epstein, D. (1998a) 'Are you a girl or are you a teacher?' The 'least adult' role in research about gender and sexuality in the primary school, in G. Walford (ed.) *Doing Research about Education*, London: Falmer.

Epstein, D. (1998b) Real boys don't work: underachievement, masculinity and the harassment of 'sissies', in D. Epstein, J. Elwood, V. Hey & J. Maw (eds.) *Failing Boys? Issues in Gender and Achievement*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Johnson, R. (1994) On the straight and the narrow: the heterosexual presumption, homophobias and schools, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Johnson, R. (1998) *Schooling Sexualities*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Kenway, J. (eds.) (1996) *Discourse*, Vol 17, no. 3.

Enslin, E. (1994) Beyond Writing: Feminist practice and the limits of ethnography, *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (4), pp. 537-538.

Erben, M. (1996) The purposes and processes of biographical method, in D. Scott & R. Usher (ed.) *Understanding Educational Research*, London: Routledge.

Esland, G. (1971) Teaching and learning as the organisation of knowledge, in Michael Young (ed.) *Knowledge and Control*, London: Collier-Macmillan.

Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and Power*, London: Longman.

Fanon, F. (1967) *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press.

Featherstone, M., Hepworth, M. & Turner, B. (eds.) (1991) *The Body, social processes and cultural theory*, London: Sage.

Finch, J. (1984) 'It's great to have someone to talk to': the ethics and politics of interviewing women, in C. Bell & H. Roberts (eds.) *Social Researching*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Fine, M. (1988) Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: the missing discourse of desire, *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 29-53.

Firestone, S. (1972) *The Dialectic of Sex, the case for feminist revolution*, London: Paladin.

- Foucault, M. (1973) *The Archeology of Knowledge*, London: Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1976) *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, trans. R. Hurley, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1977), *Discipline and Punish, the birth of the prison*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writing 1972-1977*, C. Gordon (ed.), London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1988) Technologies of the Self, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1988) The political technology of individuals, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.
- Frank, A. (1991) For a sociology of the body, in M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth & B.S. Turner (eds.) *The Body, social process and cultural theory*, London: Sage.
- Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1905) [edition 1977] *Three Essays on the theory of Sexuality*, in Pelican Freud Vol. 7, trans. J. Strachey, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1931) [edition 1977] *Female Sexuality*, in Pelican Freud, Vol. 7, trans. J. Strachey, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Friedan, B. (1974) *The Feminine Mystique*, New York: Dell.
- Fuller, M. (1984) 'Black girls in a London comprehensive', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *Life in School, the sociology of pupil culture*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Furlong, V. (1976) 'Interaction sets in the classroom: towards a study of pupil knowledge', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Giroux, H. (1988) Literacy and the pedagogy of voice and political empowerment, in *Educational Theory* 38, pp. 61-75.
- Goodson, I. (1991) Teachers' lives and educational research, in I. Goodson & R. Walker (eds.) *Biography, Identity and Schooling: episodes in educational research*, London: Falmer Press.
- Goodson, I.F. (1992) Studying teachers' lives, an emergent field of inquiry, in I.F. Goodson (ed.) *Studying Teachers' Lives*, London: Routledge.

- Goodson, I.F. & Walker, R. (eds.) (1991) *Biography, Identity and Schooling: episodes in educational research*, London: Falmer.
- Gorbutt, D. (1972) The new sociology of education, *Education for Teaching*, 89.
- Gordon, L. (1988) The politics of child sexual abuse: notes from American history, *Feminist Review*, 28.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (1996) *Nation Space: the construction of citizenship and difference in schools*, Paper presented at British Sociological Association annual conference, University of Reading.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (1998) *Friends or foes? Interpreting relations between girls in school*, paper presented at Ethnography and Education conference, University of Oxford.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (forthcoming) *Making Spaces: citizenship and difference in schools*, London: Macmillan.
- Griffin, C. (1982) *The good, the bad and the ugly: images of young women in the labour market*, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stencilled Paper, no. 40, University of Birmingham.
- Griffin, C. (1985) *Typical Girls? Young women from school to the job market*, London: Routledge.
- Guillaumin, C. (1993) The constructed body, in C.B. Burroughs & J.D. Ehrenreich (eds.) *Reading the Social Body*, Iowa: University of Iowa Press.
- Hall, S. & Jefferson, T. (eds.) (1976) *Resistance through Rituals, youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, London: Hutchinson.
- Hammersley, M. & Woods, P. (Eds.) (1976) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Harding, S. (ed.) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994) *Changing Teachers, Changing Times, teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*, New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Hargreaves, D. (1967) *Social Relations in the Secondary School*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Hargreaves, D. (1980) The occupational culture of teachers, in P. Woods (ed.) *Teacher Strategies, explorations in the sociology of the school*, London: Croom Helm.
- Haug, F. (ed.) (1987) *Female Sexualisation, a collective work of memory*, trans. E. Carter, London: Verso.
- Hawkes, G. (1996) *A Sociology of Sex and Sexuality*, Buckingham: Open

University Press.

Haywood, C. (1996) Out of the curriculum: sex talking, talking sex, *Curriculum Studies*, 4, 2, pp. 229-249.

Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C. & Walkerdine, V. (1984) *Changing the Subject, psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*, London: Methuen.

Herek, G. (1987) On heterosexual masculinity: some psychological consequences of the social construction of gender and sexuality, *American Behavioural Scientist*, Vol. 29, pp. 563-577

Hermes, J. (1995) *Reading Women's Magazines*, Cambridge: Polity.

Hewitt, M. (1991) Bio-politics and social policy: Foucault's account of welfare, in M. Featherstone, M Hepworth & B. Turner (eds.) *The Body, Social Process and Cultural Theory*, London: Sage.

Hey, V. (1997) *The Company She Keeps, an ethnography of girls' friendships*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hill Collins, P. (1990) *Black Feminist Thought: knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment*, London: Routledge.

Holland, J. (1993) *Sexuality and Ethnicity: variations in young women's sexual knowledge and practice*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J. & Ramazanoglu, C. (1994) Coming to conclusions: power and interpretation in researching young women's sexuality, in J. Purvis & M. Maynard (eds.) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*, London: Falmer.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, & S., Scott, (1990a) *Sex, Risk and Danger: AIDS education policy and young women's sexuality*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, S., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1990b) *'Don't Die of Ignorance', I Nearly Died of Embarrassment, Condoms in Context*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1991) *Pressure, Resistance and Empowerment: young women and the negotiation of safer sex*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1998) *The Male in the Head, heterosexuality, gender and power*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holt, J. (1964) *How Children Fail*, London: Pitman.

Hollway, W. (1984) Gender difference and the production of subjectivity, in J. Henriques et al. *Changing the Subject, psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*, London: Methuen.

Hollway, W. (1988) Heterosexual sex: power and desire for the other, in S Cartledge & J. Ryan (eds.) *Sex and Love and other Contradictions*, London: Women's Press.

Hollway, W. (1989) *Subjectivity and Method in Psychology, gender, meaning and science*, London: Sage.

Hollway, W. (1995) Feminist discourses and women's heterosexual desire, in S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (eds.) *Feminism and Discourse*, London: Sage.

Hood-Williams, J. (1997) Stories for sexual difference, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 81-89.

hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education and the Practice of Freedom*, London: Routledge.

Hutton, P.H. (1988) Foucault, Freud and the technologies of the self, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.

Illich, I. (1971) *Deschooling Society*, London: Calder & Boyars.

Jackson, S. (1980) Girls and sexual knowledge, in D. Spender & E. Sarah (eds.) *Learning to Lose, sexism in education*, London: The Women's Press.

Jackson, S. (1982) *Childhood and Sexuality*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Jackson, S. (1996) Heterosexuality as a problem for feminist theory, in L Adkins & V. Merchant (eds.) *Sexualising the Social, power and the organisation of sexuality*, New York: St Martin's Press.

Johnson, R. (1996) Sexual Dissonances: or the 'impossibility' of sexuality education, *Curriculum Studies*, special issue on the Sexual Politics of Schooling, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 163-189.

Johnson, R. (1997) Contested borders, contingent lives: an introduction, in D.L. Steinberg, D. Epstein & R. Johnson (eds.) *Border Patrols, policing the boundaries of heterosexuality*, London: Cassell.

Jones, A. (1993) Becoming a 'girl': poststructuralist suggestions for educational research, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 157-166.

Jones, C. & Mahony, P. (eds.) (1989) *Learning Our Lines: sexuality and social control in education*, London: Women's Press.

Kehily, M.J. (1993) 'Tales we heard in school': *sexuality and symbolic boundaries*, unpublished M.Soc. Sci thesis, Department of Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.

Kehily, M. J. (1995) Self-narration, autobiography and identity construction, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 23-31.

- Kehily, M.J. & Nayak, A. (1996) The Christmas Kiss: sexuality, story-telling and schooling, *Curriculum Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 211-227.
- Kehily, M.J. & Nayak, A. (1997) Lads and laughter: humour and the production of heterosexual hierarchies, *Gender and Education*, 9, 1, pp. 69-87.
- Kelly, L. (1988) *Surviving Sexual Violence*, London: Polity.
- Kenway, J & Willis, S. with J. Blackmore & L. Rennie (1998) *Answering Back, Gender and feminism, in school*, London: Routledge.
- Kitzinger, J. (1988) Defending innocence: ideologies of childhood, *Feminist Review*, Vol. 28, pp. 77-87.
- KOLA (1994) A burden of aloneness, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1982) *Powers of Horror*, trans. L. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Labov, W. (1972) *Language in the Inner City*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lacan, J. (1977a) *Ecrits, a selection*, trans. A. Sheridan, London: Tavistock.
- Lacan, J. (1977b) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, J.A. Miller (ed.), trans. A. Sheridan, London: Tavistock.
- Lacan, J. (1982) *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the Ecol Freudienne*, J. Mitchell & J. Rose (eds.), London: Macmillan.
- Lacey, C. (1970) *Hightown Grammar*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Lather, P. (1991) *Getting Smart, Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern*, London: Routledge.
- Lather, P. & Smithies, C. (1997) *Troubling the Angels: women living with HIV/AIDS*, Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Lawn, M. & Grace, G. (eds.) (1987) *Teachers: the culture and politics of work*, Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Lawrence, D. H. (1949) *The Rainbow*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Lee, C. (1983) *The Ostrich Position, sex, schooling and mystification*, London: Unwin.
- Lees, S. (1986) *Losing Out: sexuality and adolescent girls*, London: Hutchinson.
- Lees, S. (1993) *Sugar and Spice, sexuality and adolescent girls*, Harmondsworth:

Penguin.

Lees, S. (1994) Talking about sex in sex education, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 281-292.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1966) *The Savage Mind*, London: Weidenfield & Nicholson.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1969) *Totemism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Lobban, G. (1975) Sex roles in reading schemes, *Educational Review*, Vol. 27, no. 3.

Lupton, D. & Tulloch, J. (1996) 'All red in the face': students views on school-based HIV / AIDS and sexuality education, *Sociological Review*, vol. 44. no. 2, pp. 252-271.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1988) *Young, Gifted and Black, student-teacher relations in the schooling of black youth*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1991) Schooling, sexuality and male power: towards an emancipatory curriculum, *Gender and Education*, Vol 3, no. 3, pp. 291-309.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1992) Teachers' Work: curriculum restructuring, culture, power and comprehensive schooling, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 177-199.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1994) *The Making of Men*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1996) Deconstructing heterosexualities within school arenas, *Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 191-209.

MacKinnon, C.A. (1983) Feminism, Marxist, method and the state: toward feminist jurisprudence, *Signs, journal of women in culture and society*, Vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 635-658.

MacLure, M. (1993a) Mundane autobiography: some thoughts on self-talk in research contexts, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 14. no. 4, pp. 373-384.

MacLure, M. (1993b) Arguing for your self: identity as an organising principle in teachers' jobs and lives, *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 311-322.

Martin, R. (1988) Truth, Power, Self, an interview with Michel Foucault, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.

McRobbie, A. (1978a) *Jackie: and ideology of adolescent femininity*, Occasional paper, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.

McRobbie, A. (1978b) Working class girls and the culture of femininity, in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Women Take Issue*, London: Hutchinson.

McRobbie, A. (1981) Just like a Jackie story, in A. McRobbie & T. McCabe (eds.) *Feminism for Girls: an adventure story*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

McRobbie, A. (1991) *Jackie* magazine: romantic individualism and the teenage girl, in *Feminism and Youth Culture: from 'Jackie' to 'Just Seventeen'*, London: Macmillan.

McRobbie, A. (1996) More!: New sexualities in girls' and women's magazines, in J. Curran, D. Morley & V. Walkerdine (eds.) *Cultural Studies and Communications*, London: Arnold.

McRobbie, A. & Garber, G. (1982) Girls and subcultures, in S. Hall & T. Jefferson (eds.) *Resistance through Rituals: youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, London: Hutchinson.

Measor, L. (1989) 'Are you coming to see some dirty films today Miss?' Sex education and adolescent sexuality, in L. Holly (ed.) *Girls and Sexuality, teaching and learning*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Measor, L., Tiffin, C., & Fry, K. (1996) Gender and sex education: a study of adolescent responses, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 275-288.

Menter, I. Muschamp, Y. Nicholls, P. & Ozga, J. with Pollard A. (1997) *Work and Identity in the Primary School, a post-Fordist analysis*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Millard, E. (1997) Differently literate: gender and the construction of the developing reader, *Gender and Education*, 9, 1, pp. 31-48.

Miller, J. (1990) *Seductions: studies in reading and culture*, London: Virago.

Miller, J. (1995). Trick or Treat? The Autobiography of the Question, *English Quarterly*, Vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 22-26.

Miller, J. (1996) *School for Women*, London: Virago.

Millett, K. (1970) *Sexual Politics*, New York: Doubleday,

Mitchell, J. (1974) *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, London: Allen Lane.

Mitchell, J. & Rose, J. (eds.) (1982) *Feminine Sexuality, Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne*, trans. J. Rose, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Modleski, T. (1991) *Feminism Without Women, culture and criticism in a 'postfeminist' age*, London: Routledge.

Mort, F. (1987) *Dangerous Sexualities: medico-moral politics in England since*

1930, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Nava, M. (1984) Youth service provision, social order and the question of girls, in A. Mc Robbie & M. Nava (eds) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.

Nayak, A. & Kehily, M.J. (1996) Playing it Straight: masculinities, homophobias and schooling, *Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 211-230.

Nayak, A. (1997) Tales from the darkside: negotiating whiteness in school arenas, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, Vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 57-79.

Nias, J. (1984) The definition and maintenance of self in primary teaching, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 167-180.

Nias, J. (1989) *Primary Teachers Talking: a study of teaching as work*, London: Routledge.

Oakley, A. (1993) *Sex, Gender and Society*, Aldershot: Arena.

Ozga, J. (ed.) (1988) *Schoolwork: approaches to the labour process of teaching*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Pattman, R., Frosh, S. & Phoenix, A. (1998) Lads, machos and others: developing 'boy-centred' research, *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 125-142.

Patton, C. (1993) Tremble, Hetero Swine!, in M. Warner (ed.) *Fear of a Queer Planet, queer politics and social theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Perlstein, R. (1995) 'Funny doctor, I don't feel antidisCIPLINED': Cultural Studies as disciplinary habitus (or reading Cultural Studies), *Parallax*, Issue 1, pp. 131-141.

Personal Narratives Group (eds.) (1989) *Interpreting Women's Lives*, Bloomington : Indiana University Press.

Plummer, K. (1995) *Telling Sexual Stories, power, change and sexual worlds* London: Routledge.

Pratt, M.L. (1992) *Imperial Eyes: travel writing and transculturation*, London: Routledge.

Radway, J. (1984) *Reading the Romance: Women, patriarchy and popular literature*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Redman, P. (1994) Shifting Ground: rethinking sexuality education, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Lesbian and Gay Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Redman, P. (1998) *Investing in Romance: 'making up heterosexual masculinities*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham.

Reissman, C. K. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, London: Sage.

Rich, A. (1980) Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence, *Signs*, Vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 631-660.

Richardson, D. (ed.) (1996) *Theorising Heterosexuality, telling it straight*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Robertson, J. (1996) *Fantasy's confines: popular culture and the education of the female primary school teacher*, Paper presented at Crossroads in Cultural Studies conference, Tampere, Finland.

Rofes, E. (1995) Making our schools safe for sissies, in G. Unks (ed.) *The Gay Teen, educational theory for lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents*, London: Routledge.

Rose, J. (1986) *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*, London: Verso.

Rosser, E. & Harre, R. (1976) 'The meaning of trouble', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rubin, G. (1975) The Traffic in Women: notes on the 'political economy' of sex, in R. Reiter (ed.) *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

Rubin, G. (1984) Thinking sex: notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality, in C. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.

Saxby, H. (1973) quoted in Myra Barrs (ed.) *Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Scott, D. (1996) Ethnography and education, in D. Scott & R. Usher (ed.) *Understanding Educational Research*, London: Routledge.

Searle, C. (1974) *Mainland*, London: Calder & Boyars.

Sears, J. (ed.) (1992) *Sexuality and the Curriculum, the politics and practices of sexuality education*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Sedgwick, E.K. (1990) *Epistemology of the Closet*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

Sedgwick, E. K. (1993) How to bring your kids up gay, in M. Warner (ed.) *Fear of a Queer Planet, queer politics and social theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Sedgwick, E.K. (1994) *Tendencies*, London: Routledge.

Segal, L. (1990) *Slow Motion, changing masculinities, changing men*, London: Virago.

Seidman, S. (1998) The Brits are coming ... again: sex studies in the UK, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 107-112.

Sewell, T. (1997) *Black Masculinities and Schooling: how Black boys survive in modern schooling*, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Sex Education Forum (1995) *The Effectiveness of Sex Education*, Sex Education Forum Occasional Parliamentary Briefing Paper, no. 1, London: National Children's Bureau.

Sex Education Forum (1997) *Supporting the needs of boys and young men in sex and relationships education*, London: National Children's Bureau.

Sharp, R. & Green, A. (1975) *Education and Social Control*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Sharpe, S. (1976) *Just Like a Girl*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Shilling, C. (1991) *Body talk and body image: schooling and the production of physical capital*, paper presented to the British Sociological Association annual conference, University of Manchester, March 1991.

Shor, I. & Freire, P. (1988) What is dialogic method? *Educational Theory* 38.

Sikes, P., Measor, L. & Woods, P. (1985) *Teacher Careers, crises and continuity*, Lewes: Falmer.

Sikes, P. & Troyna, B. (1991) True Stories: a case study in the use of life history in initial teacher education, *Educational Review*, Vol. 43, pp. 3-15.

Skeggs, B. (1991) Challenging masculinity and using sexuality, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 127-138.

Skeggs, B. (1995) Theorising ethics and representation in feminist ethnography, in B. Skeggs (ed.) *Feminist Cultural Theory: Production and Process*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formations of Class and Gender, becoming respectable*, London: Sage.

Smith, A.M. (1994) *New Right Discourses on Race and Sexuality: Britain 1968-1990*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Spender, D. & Sarah, E. (1980) *Learning to Lose*, London: The Women's Press.

Stacey, Judith (1988) Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 1-27.

Stacey, Jackie (1991) Promoting normality: Section 28 and the regulation of sexuality, in S. Franklin, C. Lury & J. Stacey (eds.) *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies*, London: Harper Collins.

Stanley, L. (1987) Biography as microscope or kaleidoscope? The case of 'power' in Hannah Cullwick's relationship with Arthur Munby, *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 10, no. 1.

Stanley, L. (1990) Moments of writing: is there a feminist auto/biography? *Gender and History*, Vol 2, no 1.

Stanley, L. (1992) *The Auto/biographical I: the theory and practice of feminist auto/biography*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1983) *Breaking Out: feminist consciousness and feminist research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1993) *Breaking Out Again: feminist ontology and epistemology*, London: Routledge.

Steedman, C. (1985) 'The mother made conscious': the historical development of a primary school pedagogy, *History Workshop Journal*, no. 20.

Synnott, A. (1993) *The Body Social, symbolism, self and society*, London: Routledge.

Tagg, J. (1980) A means of surveillance: the photograph as evidence in law, *Screen Education*, no. 36.

Theweleit, K. (1987) *Male Fantasies, Vol. 1: women, floods, bodies, history*, Cambridge: Polity.

Thomson, R. (1994) Moral rhetoric and public health pragmatism: the recent politics of sex education, *Feminist Review*, 48, pp. 40-60.

Thomson, R. (1997) 'It was the way we were watching it': young men's accounts of pornography, Paper presented at British Sociological Association conference, University of York.

Thomson, R. & Scott, S. (1990) *Researching Sexuality in the Light of AIDS; historical and methodological issues*, London: Tufnell Press.

Thomson, R. & Scott, S. (1991) *Learning about Sex: young women and the social construction of sexual identity*, London: Tufnell Press.

Thorne, B. (1993) *Gender Play, girls and boys in school*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Tinkler, P. (1995) *Constructing Girlhood, popular magazines for girls growing up in England 1920-1950*, London: Taylor & Francis.

Tolson, A. (1990) Social surveillance and subjectification: the emergence of

'subculture' in the work of Henry Mayhew, *Cultural Studies*, Vol 4., no. 2.

Tong, R. (1989) *Feminist Thought, a comprehensive introduction*, Boulder CO: Westview Press.

Trenchard, L. & Warren, H. (1984) *Something to Tell You: the experiences and needs of young lesbians and gay men in London*, London: Gay Teenage Group.

Trudell, B. (1992) Inside a ninth grade sexuality classroom, the process of knowledge construction, in J. Sears (ed.) *Sexuality and the Curriculum*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Trudell, B. (1993) *Doing Sex Education: gender, politics and schooling*, London: Routledge.

Turner, B.S. (1991) Recent developments in the theory of the body, in M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth & B.S. Turner (eds.) *The Body, social process and cultural theory*, London: Sage.

Unks, G. (ed.) (1995) *The Gay Teen: educational practice and theory for lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents*, London: Routledge.

Vance, C. (ed.) (1984) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.

Vance, C. (1995) Social construction theory and sexuality, in M. Berger, B. Wallis & S. Watson (eds) *Constructing Masculinity*, New York: Routledge.

Visweswaran, K. (1994) *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Volosinov, V.N. (1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. L. Matejka & I. Turner, London: Seminar Press.

Walkerdine, V. (1981) Sex, power and pedagogy, *Screen Education*, Vol 38, pp. 14-24.

Walkerdine, V. (1984) Some day my prince will come: young girls and the preparation for adolescent sexuality, in A. McRobbie & M. Nava (eds.) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.

Walkerdine, V. (1985) On the regulation of speaking and silence, in C. Steedman, C. Urwin & V. Walkerdine (eds.) *Language, Gender and Childhood*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Walkerdine, V. (1986a) Post-structuralist theory and everyday social practices: the family and the school, in S. Wilkinson (ed.) *Feminist Social Psychology, developing theory and practice*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Walkerdine, V. (1986b) Video Replay: families, films and fantasy, in V. Burgin, J. Donald & C. Kaplan (eds.) *Formations of Fantasy*, London:

Methuen.

Walkerdine, V. (1987) *Femininity as Performance*, *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 267-279.

Walkerdine, V. (1990) *Schoolgirl Fictions*, London: Verso.

Walkerdine, V. (1997) *Daddy's Girl, young girls and popular culture*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Walkerdine, V. & Lucey, H. (1989) *Democracy in the Kitchen: regulating mothers and socialising daughters*, London: Virago.

Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Weeks, J. (1977) *Coming Out: homosexual politics in Britain from the nineteenth century to the present*, London: Quartet.

Weeks, J. (1981) *Sex, Politics and Society: the regulation of sexuality since 1880*, Harlow: Longman.

Weeks, J. (1985) *Sexuality and its Discontents*, London: Routledge.

Weeks, J. (1986) *Sexuality*, London: Tavistock.

Weeks, J. (1998) The 'homosexual role' after 30 years: an appreciation of the work of Mary McIntosh, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 131-152.

Weiner, G. & Arnot, M. (eds.) (1987) *Gender under Scrutiny: new inquiries in education*, London: Hutchinson.

Whitty, G. (1985) *Sociology and School Knowledge, Curriculum theory, research and politics*, London: Methuen.

Whyte, W.F. (1981) *Street Corner Society: the social structure of an Italian slum*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Wilkinson, S. & Kitzinger, C. (eds.) (1993) *Heterosexuality: a Feminism and Psychology Reader*, London: Sage.

Williams, R. (1965) *The Long Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Willis, P. (1974) *Symbolism and practice: a theory for the social meaning of pop music*, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stencilled Paper, no. 13, University of Birmingham.

Willis, P. (1977) *Learning to Labour, how working class kids get working class jobs* Farnborough: Saxon House.

Willis, P. (1996) *Ethno CS*, paper presented at *Crossroads in Cultural Studies* conference, Tampere, Finland.

Willmott, P. (1966) *Adolescent Boys of East London*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Winship, J. (1985) A girl needs to get streetwise: magazines for the 1980s, *Feminist Review*, no. 21, pp. 25-46.

Winship, J. (1987) *Inside Women's Magazines*, New York: Pandora.

Wolpe, A.M. (1988) *Within School Walls, the role of discipline, sexuality and the curriculum*, London: Routledge.

Wood, D.R. (1992) Teaching narratives: a source of faculty development and evaluation, *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 62, no. 4, pp. 535-550.

Wood, J. (1984) Groping towards sexism: boys' sex talk, in A. McRobbie & M. Nava (eds.) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.

Woods, P. (1985) Conversations with teachers: some aspects of life history methods, *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 13-26.

Magazines cited:

More!, Issue 198, 25 October-7 November 1995, publisher EMAP Elan.

More!, Issue 206, 14-27 February 1996, publisher EMAP Elan.

More!, Issue 208, 13-26 March 1996, publisher EMAP Elan.

'He left me for my gay friend Ian', in *More!*, Issue 198, (details above).

309

309

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adam, B.D. (1998) Theorising homophobia, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 387-404.

Aggleton, P., Homans, H. & Warwick, I. (1989) Health education, sexuality and aids, in S. Walker & L. Walker (eds.) *Politics and the Processes of Schooling*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Alderson, C. (1968) *Magazines Teenagers Read*, London: Pergamon Press.

Alloway, N. & Gilbert, P. (1997) Boys and literacy: lessons from Australia, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 49-59.

Althusser, L. (1970) Ideology and ideological state apparatuses, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, London: New Left Books.

Altman, M. (1984) Everything they always wanted you to know: the ideology of popular sex, in C. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.

Alyson, S. (ed.) (1980) *Young, Gay and Proud*, Boston MA: Alyson Publications.

Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities, reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, London: Verso.

Anyon, J. (1981) Social class and school knowledge, *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol. 11, no. 1.

Anyon, J. (1983) Intersections of gender and class: accommodation and resistance by working class and affluent females to contradictory sex-role ideologies, in S. Walker & L. Barton (eds.) *Gender, Class & Education*, Lewes: Falmer Press.

Apple, M. (1979) *Ideology and Curriculum*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Atkinson, P. (1990) *The Ethnographic Imagination, textual constructions of reality*, London: Routledge.

Atkinson, P. (1992) *Understanding Ethnographic Texts*, London: Sage.

Atkinson, P., Delamont, S. & Hammersley, M. (1993) Qualitative research traditions, in M. Hammersley (ed.) *Educational Research, current issues*, London; Paul Chapman.

Arnot, M. (1999) *Voices in Gender and Education*, Keynote address given at Voices in Gender and Education conference, University of Warwick.

Ball, S.J. (1981) *Beachside Comprehensive*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ball, S.J. (1987) *The Micro-Politics of the School*, London: Methuen.
- Ball, S.J. (1990) *Politics and Policy Making in Education, explorations in policy sociology*, London: Routledge.
- Ball, S.J. (1993) Self-doubt and soft data: social and technical trajectories in ethnographic fieldwork, in M. Hammersley (ed.) *Educational Research: current issues*, London: Paul Chapman.
- Ball, S.J. & Goodson, I. (1985) *Teachers' Lives and Careers*, London: Falmer.
- Barker, M. (1981) *The New Racism, Conservatism and the Ideology of the Tribe*, London: Junction Books.
- Barker, M. (1989) *Comics, ideology, power and the critics*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Barrs, M. (ed.) (1973) *Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Benton, M. & Benton, P. (eds.) (1971) *Touchstones 5, a teaching anthology*, Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Bland, L. (1995) *Banishing the Beast, English feminism and sexual morality 1885 - 1915*, London: Penguin.
- Bordo, S. (1993) *Unbearable Weight, feminism, Western culture and the body*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986) *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*, London: Routledge.
- Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bristow, J. (1997) *Sexuality*, London: Routledge.
- Britzman, D. (1995) 'What is this thing called love?' *Taboo, journal of culture and education*, Vol. 1, pp. 65 - 93.
- Brooks, A. (1997) *Postfeminisms: feminism, cultural theory and cultural forms*, London: Routledge.
- Bubandt, N. (1998) The odour of things: smell and the cultural elaboration of disgust in Eastern Indonesia, *Ethnos, Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 63, no. 1, pp. 48-80.
- Burgess, R.G. (ed.) (1991) *Field Research: a Sourcebook and Field Manual*, London: Routledge.
- Burgin, V. (1990) Geometry and abjection, in J. Fletcher & A. Benjamin (eds.) *Abjection, Melancholia and Love: the work of Julia Kristeva*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble, feminism and the subversion of identity*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter: on the discursive limits of 'sex'*, London: Routledge.

Byrne, E. (1978) *Women and Education*, London: Tavistock.

Cameron, D. & Frazer, E. (1996) The murderer as misogynist? in S. Jackson & S. Scott (eds.) *Feminism and Sexuality, a Reader*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Canaan, J. (1986) Why a 'slut' is a 'slut': cautionary tales of middle class teenage girls' morality, in H. Varenne (ed.) *Symbolising America*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Carson, D.L. (1992) Ideological conflict and change in the sexuality curriculum, in J. Sears (ed.) *Sexuality and the Curriculum, the politics and practice of sexuality education*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1982) *Making Histories*, London: Hutchinson.

Cesara, M. (1982) *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist: no hiding place*, London: Academic Press.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (eds.) (1986) *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cohen, A.K. (1955) *Delinquent Boys: the culture of the gang*, Chicago: Free Press.

Comfort, A. (ed.) (1974) *The Joy of Sex, a gourmet guide to lovemaking*, London: Quartet.

Connell, R.W. (1985) *Teachers' Work*, Sydney: George Allen & Unwin.

Connell, R.W. (1987) *Gender and Power, society, the person and sexual politics*, Cambridge: Polity.

Connell, R.W. (1989) Cool guys, swots and wimps: the interplay of masculinity and education, *Oxford Review of Education*, 13, pp. 291-303.

Connell, R.W. (1995) *Masculinities*, London: Polity.

Connelly, F.M. & Clandinin, D.J. (1988) *Teachers as Curriculum Planners: narratives of experience*, New York: Teachers' College Press.

Cooper, D. (1994) *Sexing the City: Lesbian and Gay Politics within the Activist State*, London: Rivers Oram Press.

Cortazzi, M. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, London: Falmer Press.

- Coward, R. (1984) *Female Desire*, London: Paladin.
- Cowie, C. & Lees, S. (1987) Slags or drags? in Feminist Review (ed.) *Sexuality: a reader*, London: Virago.
- Davies, B. (1983) The role pupils play in the social construction of classroom order, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 55-69.
- Davies, B. (1997) Constructing and deconstructing masculinities through critical literacy, *Gender and Education*, Vo. 9, no. 1, pp. 9-30.
- Denzin, N.K. (1970) *The Research Act*, Chicago: Aldine.
- Department of Health (1992) *Health of the Nation: a strategy for health in England*, London: HMSO.
- de Sade, D.A.F. (1993) *The Passionate Philosopher, A Marquis de Sade Reader*, M. Crossland (ed.), trans. M. Crossland, London: Minerva.
- Donald, J. (1985) Beacons of the future: schooling, subjection and subjectification, in Veronica Beechey & James Donald (eds.) *Subjectivity and Social Relations*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Dollimore, J. (1991) *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Dreyfus, H.L. & Rabinow, P. (1982) *Michel Foucault, beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Dworkin, A. (1981) *Our Blood: prophecies and discourses on sexual politics*, New York: G.P. Putnam.
- Dwyer, K. (1982) *Moroccan Dialogues: anthropology in question*, Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Dyer, R. (1993) *The Matter of Images: essays on representation*, London: Routledge.
- Easthope, A. (1990) *What a Man's Gotta Do, the masculine myth in popular culture*, Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- Edwards, T. (1998) Queer Fears: against the cultural turn, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 4, pp 471-483.
- Ellsworth, E. (1994) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the oppressive myths of critical pedagogy, in Lynda Stone (ed.) *The Education Feminism Reader*, London: Routledge.
- Epstein, D. (ed.) (1994) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. (1996) Keeping them in their place: hetero/sexist harassment, gender and the enforcement of heterosexuality, in L. Adkins & J. Holland (eds.) *Sexualising the Social*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Epstein, D. (1997) Boyz' Own Stories: masculinities and sexualities in schools, *Gender & Education*, Vol.9, no. 1, pp. 105-115.

Epstein, D. (1998a) 'Are you a girl or are you a teacher?' The 'least adult' role in research about gender and sexuality in the primary school, in G. Walford (ed.) *Doing Research about Education*, London: Falmer.

Epstein, D. (1998b) Real boys don't work: underachievement, masculinity and the harassment of 'sissies', in D. Epstein, J. Elwood, V. Hey & J. Maw (eds.) *Failing Boys? Issues in Gender and Achievement*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Johnson, R. (1994) On the straight and the narrow: the heterosexual presumption, homophobias and schools, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Johnson, R. (1998) *Schooling Sexualities*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D. & Kenway, J. (eds.) (1996) *Discourse*, Vol 17, no. 3.

Enslin, E. (1994) Beyond Writing: Feminist practice and the limits of ethnography, *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (4), pp. 537-538.

Erben, M. (1996) The purposes and processes of biographical method, in D. Scott & R. Usher (ed.) *Understanding Educational Research*, London: Routledge.

Esland, G. (1971) Teaching and learning as the organisation of knowledge, in Michael Young (ed.) *Knowledge and Control*, London: Collier-Macmillan.

Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and Power*, London: Longman.

Fanon, F. (1967) *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press.

Featherstone, M., Hepworth, M. & Turner, B. (eds.) (1991) *The Body, social processes and cultural theory*, London: Sage.

Finch, J. (1984) 'It's great to have someone to talk to': the ethics and politics of interviewing women, in C. Bell & H. Roberts (eds.) *Social Researching*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Fine, M. (1988) Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: the missing discourse of desire, *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 29-53.

Firestone, S. (1972) *The Dialectic of Sex, the case for feminist revolution*, London: Paladin.

- Foucault, M. (1973) *The Archeology of Knowledge*, London: Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1976) *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, trans. R. Hurley, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1977), *Discipline and Punish, the birth of the prison*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writing 1972-1977*, C. Gordon (ed.), London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1988) Technologies of the Self, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1988) The political technology of individuals, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.
- Frank, A. (1991) For a sociology of the body, in M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth & B.S. Turner (eds.) *The Body, social process and cultural theory*, London: Sage.
- Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1905) [edition 1977] *Three Essays on the theory of Sexuality*, in Pelican Freud Vol. 7, trans. J. Strachey, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1931) [edition 1977] *Female Sexuality*, in Pelican Freud, Vol. 7, trans. J. Strachey, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Friedan, B. (1974) *The Feminine Mystique*, New York: Dell.
- Fuller, M. (1984) 'Black girls in a London comprehensive', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *Life in School, the sociology of pupil culture*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Furlong, V. (1976) 'Interaction sets in the classroom: towards a study of pupil knowledge', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Giroux, H. (1988) Literacy and the pedagogy of voice and political empowerment, in *Educational Theory* 38, pp. 61-75.
- Goodson, I. (1991) Teachers' lives and educational research, in I. Goodson & R. Walker (eds.) *Biography, Identity and Schooling: episodes in educational research*, London: Falmer Press.
- Goodson, I.F. (1992) Studying teachers' lives, an emergent field of inquiry, in I.F. Goodson (ed.) *Studying Teachers' Lives*, London: Routledge.

- Goodson, I.F. & Walker, R. (eds.) (1991) *Biography, Identity and Schooling: episodes in educational research*, London: Falmer.
- Gorbutt, D. (1972) The new sociology of education, *Education for Teaching*, 89.
- Gordon, L. (1988) The politics of child sexual abuse: notes from American history, *Feminist Review*, 28.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (1996) *Nation Space: the construction of citizenship and difference in schools*, Paper presented at British Sociological Association annual conference, University of Reading.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (1998) *Friends or foes? Interpreting relations between girls in school*, paper presented at Ethnography and Education conference, University of Oxford.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (forthcoming) *Making Spaces: citizenship and difference in schools*, London: Macmillan.
- Griffin, C. (1982) *The good, the bad and the ugly: images of young women in the labour market*, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stencilled Paper, no. 40, University of Birmingham.
- Griffin, C. (1985) *Typical Girls? Young women from school to the job market*, London: Routledge.
- Guillaumin, C. (1993) The constructed body, in C.B. Burroughs & J.D. Ehrenreich (eds.) *Reading the Social Body*, Iowa: University of Iowa Press.
- Hall, S. & Jefferson, T. (eds.) (1976) *Resistance through Rituals, youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, London: Hutchinson.
- Hammersley, M. & Woods, P. (Eds.) (1976) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Harding, S. (ed.) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994) *Changing Teachers, Changing Times, teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*, New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Hargreaves, D. (1967) *Social Relations in the Secondary School*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Hargreaves, D. (1980) The occupational culture of teachers, in P. Woods (ed.) *Teacher Strategies, explorations in the sociology of the school*, London: Croom Helm.
- Haug, F. (ed.) (1987) *Female Sexualisation, a collective work of memory*, trans. E. Carter, London: Verso.
- Hawkes, G. (1996) *A Sociology of Sex and Sexuality*, Buckingham: Open

University Press.

Haywood, C. (1996) Out of the curriculum: sex talking, talking sex, *Curriculum Studies*, 4, 2, pp. 229-249.

Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C. & Walkerdine, V. (1984) *Changing the Subject, psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*, London: Methuen.

Herek, G. (1987) On heterosexual masculinity: some psychological consequences of the social construction of gender and sexuality, *American Behavioural Scientist*, Vol. 29, pp. 563-577

Hermes, J. (1995) *Reading Women's Magazines*, Cambridge: Polity.

Hewitt, M. (1991) Bio-politics and social policy: Foucault's account of welfare, in M. Featherstone, M Hepworth & B. Turner (eds.) *The Body, Social Process and Cultural Theory*, London: Sage.

Hey, V. (1997) *The Company She Keeps, an ethnography of girls' friendships*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hill Collins, P. (1990) *Black Feminist Thought: knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment*, London: Routledge.

Holland, J. (1993) *Sexuality and Ethnicity: variations in young women's sexual knowledge and practice*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J. & Ramazanoglu, C. (1994) Coming to conclusions: power and interpretation in researching young women's sexuality, in J. Purvis & M. Maynard (eds.) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*, London: Falmer.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, & S., Scott, (1990) *Sex, Risk and Danger: AIDS education policy and young women's sexuality*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, S., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1990) *'Don't Die of Ignorance', I Nearly Died of Embarrassment, Condoms in Context*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1991) *Pressure, Resistance and Empowerment: young women and the negotiation of safer sex*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Sharpe, S. & Thomson, R. (1998) *The Male in the Head, heterosexuality, gender and power*, London: Tufnell Press.

Holt, J. (1964) *How Children Fail*, London: Pitman.

Hollway, W. (1984) Gender difference and the production of subjectivity, in J. Henriques et al. *Changing the Subject, psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*, London: Methuen.

- Hollway, W. (1988) Heterosexual sex: power and desire for the other, in S Cartledge & J. Ryan (eds.) *Sex and Love and other Contradictions*, London: Women's Press.
- Hollway, W. (1989) *Subjectivity and Method in Psychology, gender, meaning and science*, London: Sage.
- Hollway, W. (1995) Feminist discourses and women's heterosexual desire, in S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (eds.) *Feminism and Discourse*, London: Sage.
- Hood-Williams, J. (1997) Stories for sexual difference, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 81-89.
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education and the Practice of Freedom*, London: Routledge.
- Hutton, P.H. (1988) Foucault, Freud and the technologies of the self, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.
- Illich, I. (1971) *Deschooling Society*, London: Calder & Boyars.
- Jackson, S. (1980) Girls and sexual knowledge, in D. Spender & E. Sarah (eds.) *Learning to Lose, sexism in education*, London: The Women's Press.
- Jackson, S. (1982) *Childhood and Sexuality*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Jackson, S. (1996) Heterosexuality as a problem for feminist theory, in L Adkins & V. Merchant (eds.) *Sexualising the Social, power and the organisation of sexuality*, New York: St Martin's Press.
- Johnson, R. (1996) Sexual Dissonances: or the 'impossibility' of sexuality education, *Curriculum Studies*, special issue on the Sexual Politics of Schooling, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 163-189.
- Johnson, R. (1997) Contested borders, contingent lives: an introduction, in D.L. Steinberg, D. Epstein & R. Johnson (eds.) *Border Patrols, policing the boundaries of heterosexuality*, London: Cassell.
- Jones, A. (1993) Becoming a 'girl': poststructuralist suggestions for educational research, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 157-166.
- Jones, C. & Mahony, P. (eds.) (1989) *Learning Our Lines: sexuality and social control in education*, London: Women's Press.
- Kehily, M.J. (1993) 'Tales we heard in school': sexuality and symbolic boundaries, unpublished M.Soc. Sci thesis, Department of Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.
- Kehily, M. J. (1995) Self-narration, autobiography and identity construction, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 23-31.

- Kehily, M.J. & Nayak, A. (1996) The Christmas Kiss: sexuality, story-telling and schooling, *Curriculum Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 211-227.
- Kehily, M.J. & Nayak, A. (1997) Lads and laughter: humour and the production of heterosexual hierarchies, *Gender and Education*, 9, 1, pp. 69-87.
- Kelly, L. (1988) *Surviving Sexual Violence*, London: Polity.
- Kenway, J & Willis, S. with J. Blackmore & L. Rennie (1998) *Answering Back, Gender and feminism, in school*, London: Routledge.
- Kitzinger, J. (1988) Defending innocence: ideologies of childhood, *Feminist Review*, Vol. 28, pp. 77-87.
- KOLA (1994) A burden of aloneness, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Gay and Lesbian Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1982) *Powers of Horror*, trans. L. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Labov, W. (1972) *Language in the Inner City*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lacan, J. (1977) *Escrits, a selection*, trans. A. Sheridan, London: Tavistock.
- Lacan, J. (1977) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, J.A. Miller (ed.), trans. A. Sheridan, London: Tavistock.
- Lacan, J. (1982) *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the Ecol Freudienne*, J. Mitchell & J. Rose (eds.), London: Macmillan.
- Lacey, C. (1970) *Hightown Grammar*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Lather, P. (1991) *Getting Smart, Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern*, London: Routledge.
- Lather, P. & Smithies, C. (1997) *Troubling the Angels: women living with HIV/AIDS*, Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Lawn, M. & Grace, G. (eds.) (1987) *Teachers: the culture and politics of work*, Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Lawrence, D. H. (1949) *The Rainbow*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Lee, C. (1983) *The Ostrich Position, sex, schooling and mystification*, London: Unwin.
- Lees, S. (1986) *Losing Out: sexuality and adolescent girls*, London: Hutchinson.
- Lees, S. (1993) *Sugar and Spice, sexuality and adolescent girls*, Harmondsworth:

Penguin.

Lees, S. (1994) Talking about sex in sex education, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 281-292.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1966) *The Savage Mind*, London: Weidenfield & Nicholson.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1969) *Totemism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Lobban, G. (1975) Sex roles in reading schemes, *Educational Review*, Vol. 27, no. 3.

Lupton, D. & Tulloch, J. (1996) 'All red in the face': students views on school-based HIV / AIDS and sexuality education, *Sociological Review*, vol. 44. no. 2, pp. 252-271.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1988) *Young, Gifted and Black, student-teacher relations in the schooling of black youth*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1991) Schooling, sexuality and male power: towards an emancipatory curriculum, *Gender and Education*, Vol 3, no. 3, pp. 291-309.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1992) Teachers' Work: curriculum restructuring, culture, power and comprehensive schooling, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 177-199.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1994) *The Making of Men*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Mac an Ghaill, M. (1996) Deconstructing heterosexualities within school arenas, *Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 191-209.

MacKinnon, C.A. (1983) Feminism, Marxist, method and the state: toward feminist jurisprudence, *Signs, journal of women in culture and society*, Vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 635-658.

MacLure, M. (1993a) Mundane autobiography: some thoughts on self-talk in research contexts, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 14. no. 4, pp. 373-384.

MacLure, M. (1993b) Arguing for your self: identity as an organising principle in teachers' jobs and lives, *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 311-322.

Martin, R. (1988) Truth, Power, Self, an interview with Michel Foucault, in L. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton, (eds.) *Technologies of the Self, a seminar with Michel Foucault*, London: Tavistock.

McRobbie, A. (1978a) *Jackie: and ideology of adolescent femininity*, Occasional paper, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.

- McRobbie, A. (1978b) Working class girls and the culture of femininity, in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Women Take Issue*, London: Hutchinson.
- McRobbie, A. (1981) Just like a Jackie story, in A. McRobbie & T. McCabe (eds.) *Feminism for Girls: an adventure story*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- McRobbie, A. (1991) *Jackie* magazine: romantic individualism and the teenage girl, in *Feminism and Youth Culture: from 'Jackie' to 'Just Seventeen'*, London: Macmillan.
- McRobbie, A. (1996) More!: New sexualities in girls' and women's magazines, in J. Curran, D. Morley & V. Walkerdine (eds.) *Cultural Studies and Communications*, London: Arnold.
- McRobbie, A. & Garber, G. (1982) Girls and subcultures, in S. Hall & T. Jefferson (eds.) *Resistance through Rituals: youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, London: Hutchinson.
- Measor, L. (1989) 'Are you coming to see some dirty films today Miss?' Sex education and adolescent sexuality, in L. Holly (ed.) *Girls and Sexuality, teaching and learning*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Measor, L., Tiffin, C., & Fry, K. (1996) Gender and sex education: a study of adolescent responses, *Gender and Education*, Vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 275-288.
- Menter, I. Muschamp, Y. Nicholls, P. & Ozga, J. with Pollard A. (1997) *Work and Identity in the Primary School, a post-Fordist analysis*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Millard, E. (1997) Differently literate: gender and the construction of the developing reader, *Gender and Education*, 9, 1, pp. 31-48.
- Miller, J. (1990) *Seductions: studies in reading and culture*, London: Virago.
- Miller, J. (1995). Trick or Treat? The Autobiography of the Question, *English Quarterly*, Vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 22-26.
- Miller, J. (1996) *School for Women*, London: Virago.
- Millett, K. (1970) *Sexual Politics*, New York: Doubleday,
- Mitchell, J. (1974) *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, London: Allen Lane.
- Mitchell, J. & Rose, J. (eds.) (1982) *Feminine Sexuality, Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne*, trans. J. Rose, Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Modleski, T. (1991) *Feminism Without Women, culture and criticism in a 'postfeminist' age*, London: Routledge.
- Mort, F. (1987) *Dangerous Sexualities: medico-moral politics in England since*

1930, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Nava, M. (1984) Youth service provision, social order and the question of girls, in A. Mc Robbie & M. Nava (eds) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.

Nayak, A. & Kehily, M.J. (1996) Playing it Straight: masculinities, homophobias and schooling, *Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 211-230.

Nayak, A. (1997) Tales from the darkside: negotiating whiteness in school arenas, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, Vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 57-79.

Nias, J. (1984) The definition and maintenance of self in primary teaching, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 167-180.

Nias, J. (1989) *Primary Teachers Talking: a study of teaching as work*, London: Routledge.

Oakley, A. (1993) *Sex, Gender and Society*, Aldershot: Arena.

Ozga, J. (ed.) (1988) *Schoolwork: approaches to the labour process of teaching*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Pattman, R., Frosh, S. & Phoenix, A. (1998) Lads, machos and others: developing 'boy-centred' research, *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 125-142.

Patton, C. (1993) Tremble, Hetero Swine!, in M. Warner (ed.) *Fear of a Queer Planet, queer politics and social theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Perlstein, R. (1995) 'Funny doctor, I don't feel antidisCIPLINED': Cultural Studies as disciplinary habitus (or reading Cultural Studies), *Parallax*, Issue 1, pp. 131-141.

Personal Narratives Group (eds.) (1989) *Interpreting Women's Lives*, Bloomington : Indiana University Press.

Plummer, K. (1995) *Telling Sexual Stories, power, change and sexual worlds* London: Routledge.

Pratt, M.L. (1992) *Imperial Eyes: travel writing and transculturation*, London: Routledge.

Radway, J. (1984) *Reading the Romance: Women, patriarchy and popular literature*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Redman, P. (1994) Shifting Ground: rethinking sexuality education, in D. Epstein (ed.) *Challenging Lesbian and Gay Inequalities in Education*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Redman, P. (1998) *Investing in Romance: 'making up heterosexual masculinities*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham.
- Reissman, C. K. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, London: Sage.
- Rich, A. (1980) Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence, *Signs*, Vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 631-660.
- Richardson, D. (ed.) (1996) *Theorising Heterosexuality, telling it straight*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Robertson, J. (1996) *Fantasy's confines: popular culture and the education of the female primary school teacher*, Paper presented at Crossroads in Cultural Studies conference, Tampere, Finland.
- Rofes, E. (1995) Making our schools safe for sissies, in G. Unks (ed.) *The Gay Teen, educational theory for lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents*, London: Routledge.
- Rose, J. (1986) *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*, London: Verso.
- Rosser, E. & Harre, R. (1976) 'The meaning of trouble', in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.) *The Process of Schooling, a sociological reader*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Rubin, G. (1975) The Traffic in Women: notes on the 'political economy' of sex, in R. Reiter (ed.) *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Rubin, G. (1984) Thinking sex: notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality, in C. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.
- Saxby, H. (1973) quoted in Myra Barrs (ed.) *Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Scott, D. (1996) Ethnography and education, in D. Scott & R. Usher (ed.) *Understanding Educational Research*, London: Routledge.
- Searle, C. (1974) *Mainland*, London: Calder & Boyars.
- Sears, J. (ed.) (1992) *Sexuality and the Curriculum, the politics and practices of sexuality education*, New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Sedgwick, E.K. (1990) *Epistemology of the Closet*, Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1993) How to bring your kids up gay, in M. Warner (ed.) *Fear of a Queer Planet, queer politics and social theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sedgwick, E.K. (1994) *Tendencies*, London: Routledge.

Segal, L. (1990) *Slow Motion, changing masculinities, changing men*, London: Virago.

Seidman, S. (1998) The Brits are coming ... again: sex studies in the UK, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 107-112.

Sewell, T. (1997) *Black Masculinities and Schooling: how Black boys survive in modern schooling*, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Sex Education Forum (1995) *The Effectiveness of Sex Education*, Sex Education Forum Occasional Parliamentary Briefing Paper, no. 1, London: National Children's Bureau.

Sex Education Forum (1997) *Supporting the needs of boys and young men in sex and relationships education*, London: National Children's Bureau.

Sharp, R. & Green, A. (1975) *Eductation and Social Control*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Sharpe, S. (1976) *Just Like a Girl*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Shilling, C. (1991) *Body talk and body image: schooling and the production of physical capital*, paper presented to the British Sociological Association annual conference, University of Manchester, March 1991.

Shor, I. & Freire, P. (1988) What is dialogic method? *Educational Theory* 38.

Sikes, P., Measor, L. & Woods, P. (1985) *Teacher Careers, crises and continuity*, Lewes: Falmer.

Sikes, P. & Troyna, B. (1991) True Stories: a case study in the use of life history in initial teacher education, *Educational Review*, Vol. 43, pp. 3-15.

Skeggs, B. (1991) Challenging masculinity and using sexuality, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 127-138.

Skeggs, B. (1995) Theorising ethics and representation in feminist ethnography, in B. Skeggs (ed.) *Feminist Cultural Theory: Production and Process*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formations of Class and Gender, becoming respectable*, London: Sage.

Smith, A.M. (1994) *New Right Discourses on Race and Sexuality: Britain 1968-1990*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Spender, D. & Sarah, E. (1980) *Learning to Lose*, London: The Women's Press.

Stacey, Judith (1988) Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 1-27.

Stacey, Jackie (1991) Promoting normality: Section 28 and the regulation of sexuality, in S. Franklin, C. Lury & J. Stacey (eds.) *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies*, London: Harper Collins.

Stanley, L. (1987) Biography as microscope or kaleidoscope? The case of 'power' in Hannah Cullwick's relationship with Arthur Munby, *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 10, no. 1.

Stanley, L. (1990) Moments of writing: is there a feminist auto/biography? *Gender and History*, Vol 2, no 1.

Stanley, L. (1992) *The Auto/biographical I: the theory and practice of feminist auto/biography*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1983) *Breaking Out: feminist consciousness and feminist research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1993) *Breaking Out Again: feminist ontology and epistemology*, London: Routledge.

Steedman, C. (1985) 'The mother made conscious': the historical development of a primary school pedagogy, *History Workshop Journal*, no. 20.

Synnott, A. (1993) *The Body Social, symbolism, self and society*, London: Routledge.

Tagg, J. (1980) A means of surveillance: the photograph as evidence in law, *Screen Education*, no. 36.

Theweleit, K. (1987) *Male Fantasies, Vol. 1: women, floods, bodies, history*, Cambridge: Polity.

Thomson, R. (1994) Moral rhetoric and public health pragmatism: the recent politics of sex education, *Feminist Review*, 48, pp. 40-60.

Thomson, R. (1997) 'It was the way we were watching it': young men's accounts of pornography, Paper presented at British Sociological Association conference, University of York.

Thomson, R. & Scott, S. (1990) *Researching Sexuality in the Light of AIDS; historical and methodological issues*, London: Tufnell Press.

Thomson, R. & Scott, S. (1991) *Learning about Sex: young women and the social construction of sexual identity*, London: Tufnell Press.

Thorne, B. (1993) *Gender Play, girls and boys in school*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Tinkler, P. (1995) *Constructing Girlhood, popular magazines for girls growing up in England 1920-1950*, London: Taylor & Francis.

Tolson, A. (1990) Social surveillance and subjectification: the emergence of

- 'subculture' in the work of Henry Mayhew, *Cultural Studies*, Vol 4., no. 2.
- Tong, R. (1989) *Feminist Thought, a comprehensive introduction*, Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Trenchard, L. & Warren, H. (1984) *Something to Tell You: the experiences and needs of young lesbians and gay men in London*, London: Gay Teenage Group.
- Trudell, B. (1992) Inside a ninth grade sexuality classroom, the process of knowledge construction, in J. Sears (ed.) *Sexuality and the Curriculum*, New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Trudell, B. (1993) *Doing Sex Education: gender, politics and schooling*, London: Routledge.
- Turner, B.S. (1991) Recent developments in the theory of the body, in M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth & B.S. Turner (eds.) *The Body, social process and cultural theory*, London: Sage.
- Unks, G. (ed.) (1995) *The Gay Teen: educational practice and theory for lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents*, London: Routledge.
- Vance, C. (ed.) (1984) *Pleasure and Danger, exploring female sexuality*, London: Pandora.
- Vance, C. (1995) Social construction theory and sexuality, in M. Berger, B. Wallis & S. Watson (eds) *Constructing Masculinity*, New York: Routledge.
- Visweswaran, K. (1994) *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Volosinov, V.N. (1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. L. Matejka & I. Turner, London: Seminar Press.
- Walkerdine, V. (1981) Sex, power and pedagogy, *Screen Education*, Vol 38, pp. 14-24.
- Walkerdine, V. (1984) Some day my prince will come: young girls and the preparation for adolescent sexuality, in A. McRobbie & M. Nava (eds.) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.
- Walkerdine, V. (1985) On the regulation of speaking and silence, in C. Steedman, C. Urwin & V. Walkerdine (eds.) *Language, Gender and Childhood*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Walkerdine, V. (1986a) Post-structuralist theory and everyday social practices: the family and the school, in S. Wilkinson (ed.) *Feminist Social Psychology, developing theory and practice*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Walkerdine, V. (1986b) Video Replay: families, films and fantasy, in V. Burgin, J. Donald & C. Kaplan (eds.) *Formations of Fantasy*, London:

Methuen.

Walkerdine, V. (1987) *Femininity as Performance*, *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 267-279.

Walkerdine, V. (1990) *Schoolgirl Fictions*, London: Verso.

Walkerdine, V. (1997) *Daddy's Girl, young girls and popular culture*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Walkerdine, V. & Lucey, H. (1989) *Democracy in the Kitchen: regulating mothers and socialising daughters*, London: Virago.

Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Weeks, J (1977) *Coming Out: homosexual politics in Britain from the nineteenth century to the present*, London: Quartet.

Weeks, J. (1981) *Sex, Politics and Society: the regulation of sexuality since 1880*, Harlow: Longman.

Weeks, J. (1985) *Sexuality and its Discontents*, London: Routledge.

Weeks, J. (1986) *Sexuality*, London: Tavistock.

Weeks, J. (1998) The 'homosexual role' after 30 years: an appreciation of the work of Mary McIntosh, *Sexualities*, Vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 131-152.

Weiner, G. & Arnot, M. (eds.) (1987) *Gender under Scrutiny: new inquiries in education*, London: Hutchinson.

Whitty, G. (1985) *Sociology and School Knowledge, Curriculum theory, research and politics*, London: Methuen.

Whyte, W.F. (1981) *Street Corner Society: the social structure of an Italian slum*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Wilkinson, S. & Kitzinger, C. (eds.) (1993) *Heterosexuality: a Feminism and Psychology Reader*, London: Sage.

Williams, R. (1965) *The Long Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Willis, P. (1974) *Symbolism and practice: a theory for the social meaning of pop music*, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stencilled Paper, no. 13, University of Birmingham.

Willis, P. (1977) *Learning to Labour, how working class kids get working class jobs* Farnborough: Saxon House.

Willis, P. (1996) *Ethno CS*, paper presented at *Crossroads in Cultural Studies* conference, Tampere, Finland.

Willmott, P. (1966) *Adolescent Boys of East London*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Winship, J. (1985) A girl needs to get streetwise: magazines for the 1980s, *Feminist Review*, no. 21, pp. 25-46.

Winship, J. (1987) *Inside Women's Magazines*, New York: Pandora.

Wolpe, A.M. (1988) *Within School Walls, the role of discipline, sexuality and the curriculum*, London: Routledge.

Wood, D.R. (1992) Teaching narratives: a source of faculty development and evaluation, *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 62, no. 4, pp. 535-550.

Wood, J. (1984) Groping towards sexism: boys' sex talk, in A. McRobbie & M. Nava (eds.) *Gender and Generation*, London: Macmillan.

Woods, P. (1985) Conversations with teachers: some aspects of life history methods, *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 13-26.

Magazines cited:

More!, Issue 198, 25 October-7 November 1995, publisher EMAP Elan.

More!, Issue 206, 14-27 February 1996, publisher EMAP Elan.

More!, Issue 208, 13-26 March 1996, publisher EMAP Elan.

'He left me for my gay friend Ian', in *More!*, Issue 198, (details above).

